恋と心臓と、それから。

Uramikoi,Koi,Uramikoi.

秋タカ

ウラミコイ、コイ、ウラミコイ。

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

Uramikoi,Koi,Uramikoi.

秋タカ

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197

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

子国恭一

好奇心旺盛な子の当主…だった。
透也との戦いで実は妖怪化している。

猫ヶ崎夏歩

恭一を殺すはずの恨み猫だが、好奇心が恭一への想いにつながり協力関係に。

子国宮湖

子家現当主。超強い。

丑蔵朱華

丑家当主。恭一に想いを寄せる怪力少女。鬼にされてしまう。

戌原咲直

戌家当主。妖怪に対抗する能力を持つ。

戌原閃

宮湖につく護衛。咲直に能力を譲る。

申々町千恵

咲直とはまさに犬猿の仲。町の蔵書を管理する家。

午坂遥菜

午家当主。頼りになるよ。

寅岩虎虎

朱華のいとこ。明るい性格だが、裏では…。

酉寺啓太郎

酉家当主。咲直と千恵の学校の先生。結界系に強い。

辰河勇全

辰家当主。恭一の祖父。恭一の幼なじみ…！

亥山健児

恭一の兄貴分的存在。亥家当主。

鼬塚透也

子国家に恨みを持ち襲撃するも、恭一と夏歩に退けられる。透也を仕向けた黒幕がいるようだが…。

前巻まで 十二町で頻発する辻斬り事件。その正体は卯の当主・卯ノ崖によるものだった。
だが、実はさらなる黒幕がおり、虎虎とも絡んでいる様子。そんな折、朱華は恭一をデートに誘う。
勇気を出した一日だったが、帰り道に何者かの凶刃に倒れ、鬼と化した…！

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ、コイ、ウラミコイ。

WHERE IS SHE?

TWO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OUT LATE AT NIGHT WITH ONLY EACH OTHER IS ASKING FOR TROUBLE...!

I DON'T MIND YOU GOING ON A DATE IF IT'S WITH KYOICHI-KUN, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOUR DADDY'S GOING TO LET YOU OFF THE HOOK ON YOUR CURFEW!!

WHERE THE HECK IS SHE!?

37 years old

We haven't been on one since she was in grade school!

I WANT A DADDY-DAUGHTER DATE!

DARN IT! KYOICHI-KUN!

SHE USED TO HAVE THE ROUGHEST PERSONALITY WHEN SHE WAS LITTLE, BUT SHE LEARNED TO CONTROL HERSELF AFTER BECOMING KYOICHI-KUN'S BODYGUARD.

..BUT KNOWING IT'S KYOICHI-KUN SHE'S WITH MAKES ME FEEL BETTER...

:

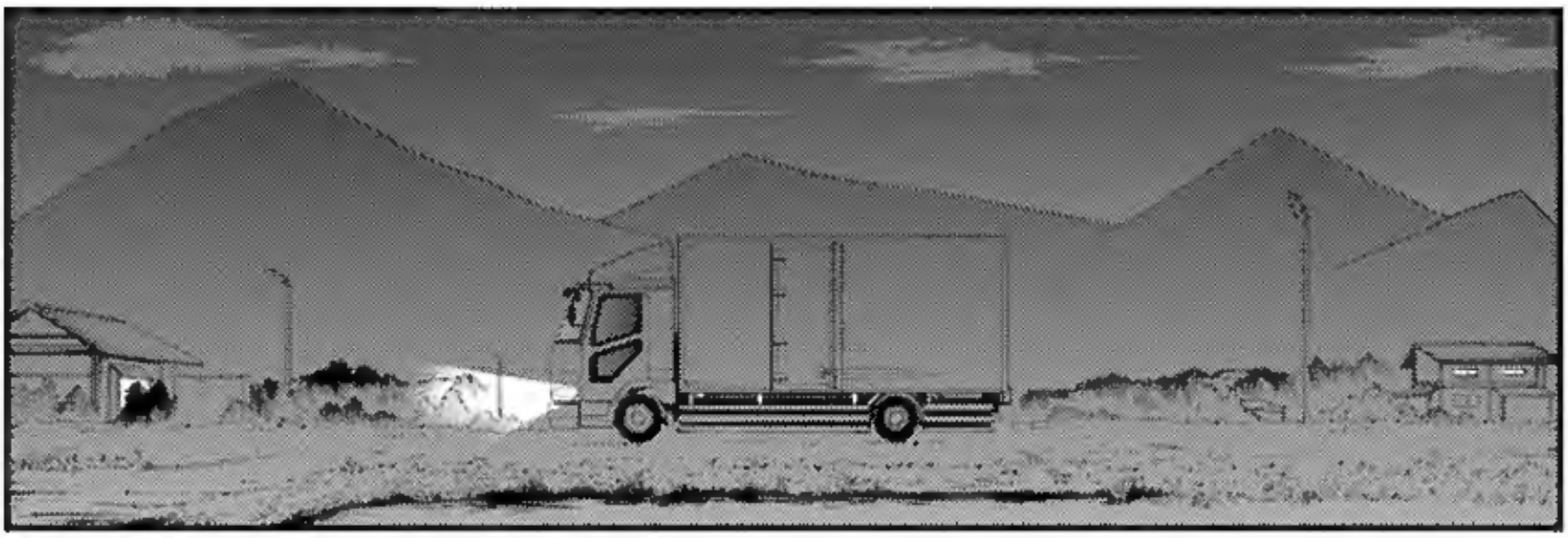
I DON'T KNOW WHY I CAN'T REACH HER AT ALL, BUT I KNOW I WILL THIS TIME!!

BUT! THAT DOESN'T EXCUSE THIS KIND OF BEHAVIOR!

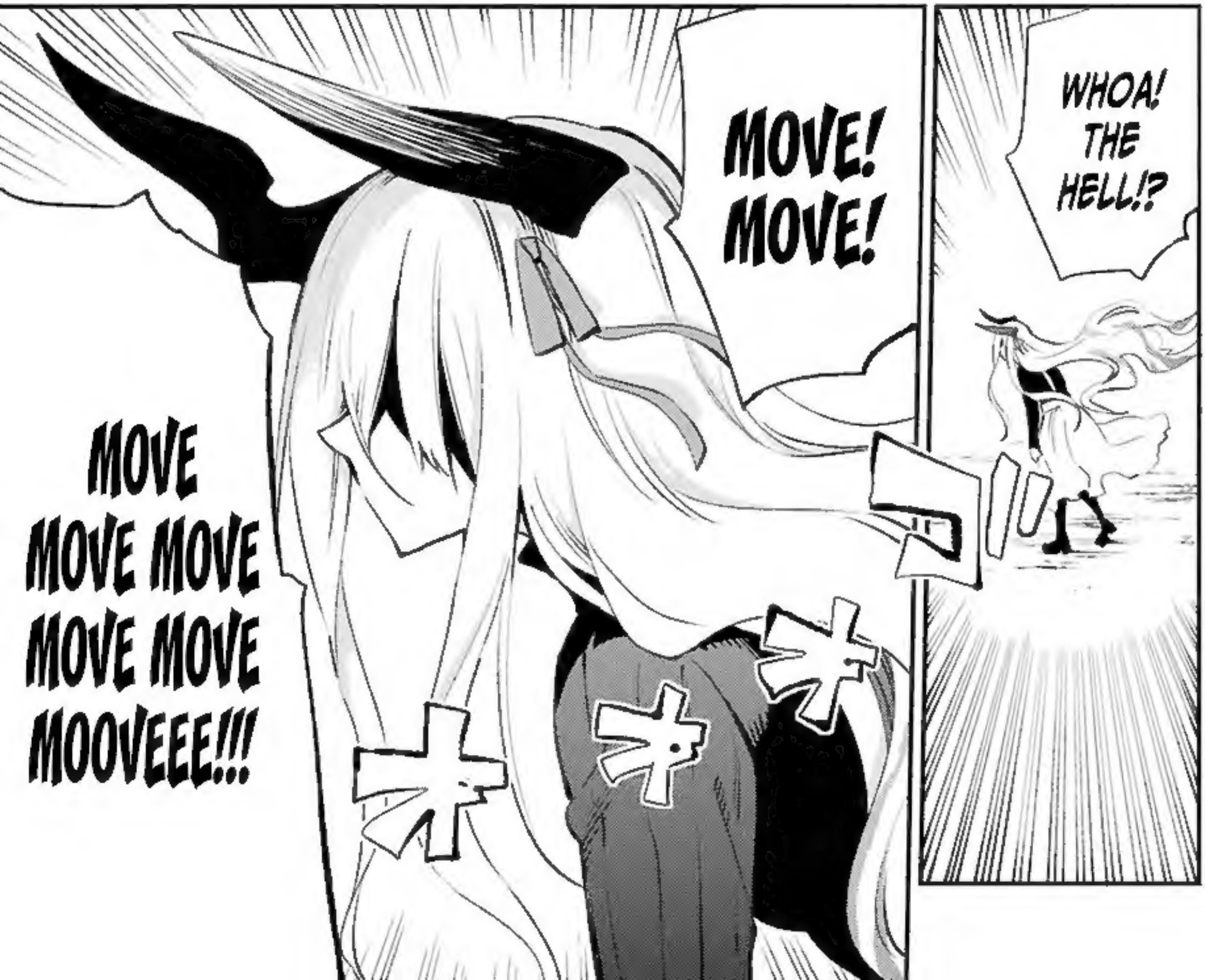
NO SERVICE...?

圏外

...? WHAT?



HEY! WATCH OUT! SENPAI! IN FRONT OF YOU!
WHAT? MINE ALWAYS CONNECTS AROUND HERE. URGH, WHERE DID I PUT MINE?
HUH...? MY PHONE ISN'T CONNECTING. IS IT BECAUSE WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE?


MOVE! MOVE!
WHOA! THE HELL!?
MOVE MOVE MOVE MOVE MOVE MOVEEE!!!

CHAPTER 31: THE HEART BECOMES AN OGRE

WE GOTTA GET... YOU'RE SO FAST!!

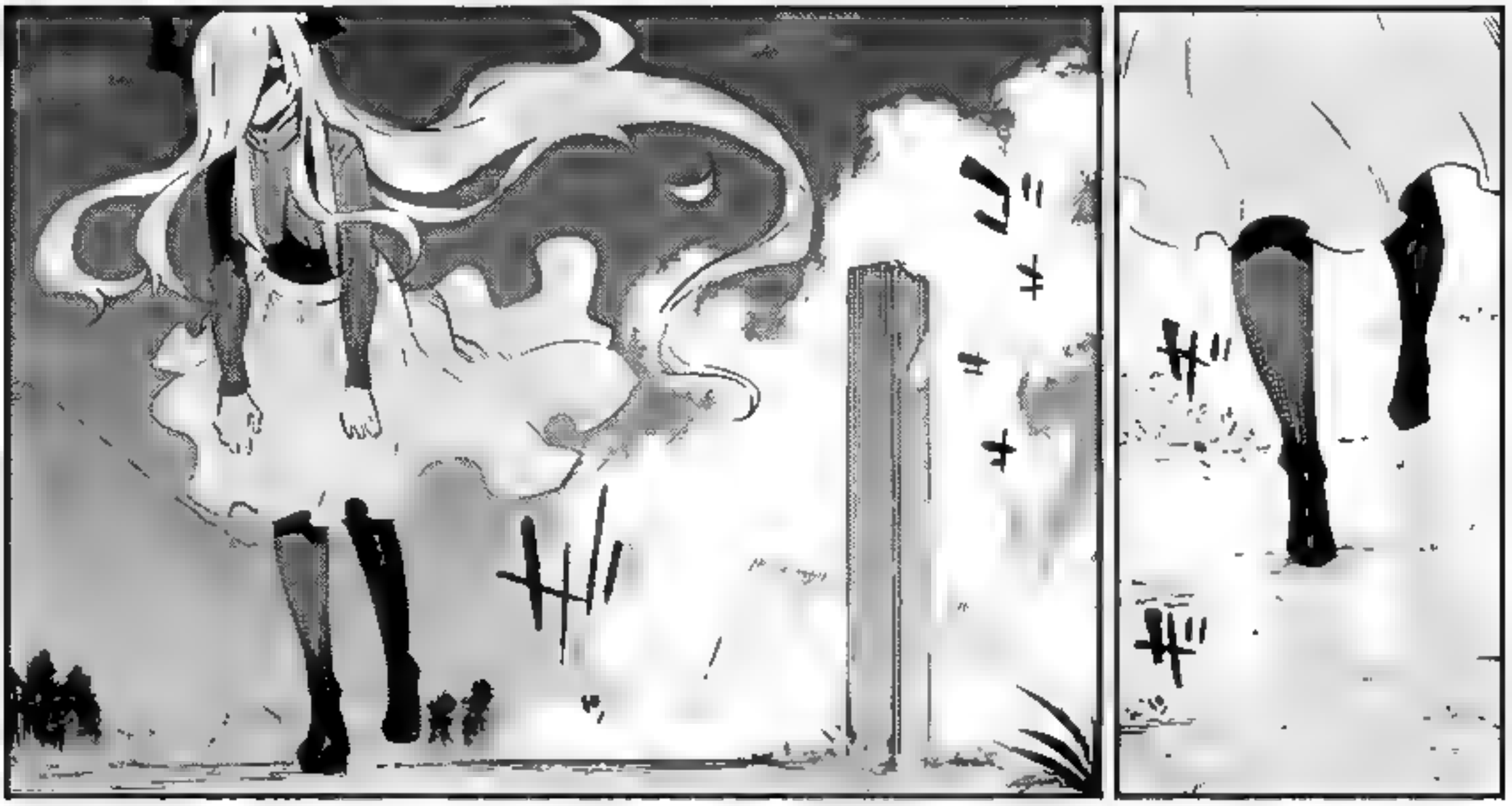
NO!

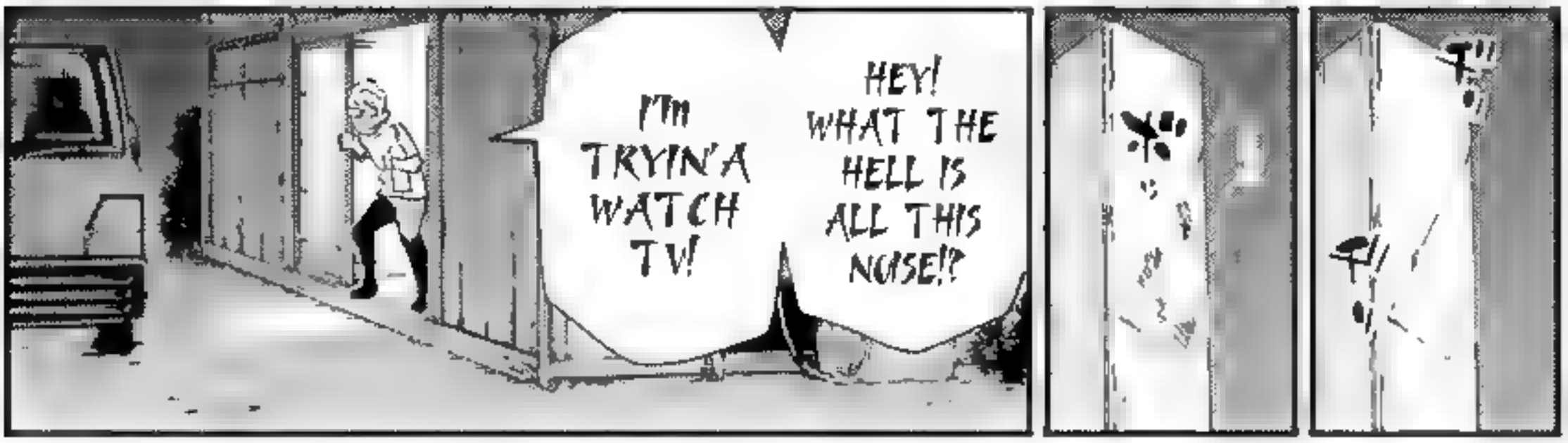
SHIT! GET OUT!

ゴ
ゴ
ゴ
ゴ

THE HELL... IS THIS...?

IS THAT AN OGRE...?




I'm TRYIN'A WATCH TV!
HEY! WHAT THE HELL IS ALL THIS NOISE!?

HEY YOU! MISSUS! CLEAN UP YER MESS!
YA YOUNGSTERS THESE DAYS PISS ME OFF!

子 丑 寅 卯

辰 巳

WHA...

THE DETECTION BARRIER WAS DESTROYED WITHOUT A TRACE...?

申 酉 戌

辰 巳 午 未

丑 寅 卯

THIS ISN'T GOOD...!

THEN THAT MEANS SOMEONE ELSE BECAME A YOKAI...!? THAT'S THE DIRECTION OF THE OX-AND TIGER CLANS, I THINK!..

THIS OMINOUS FEELING...! IT'S THE SAME AS BACK WHEN KYOICHI BECAME A YOKAI...!

AYAKA CHAN!?

AND I FELT... SOME-ONE'S PRESENCE FOR A MOMENT... IT WAS...!!

WHA' IS IT?

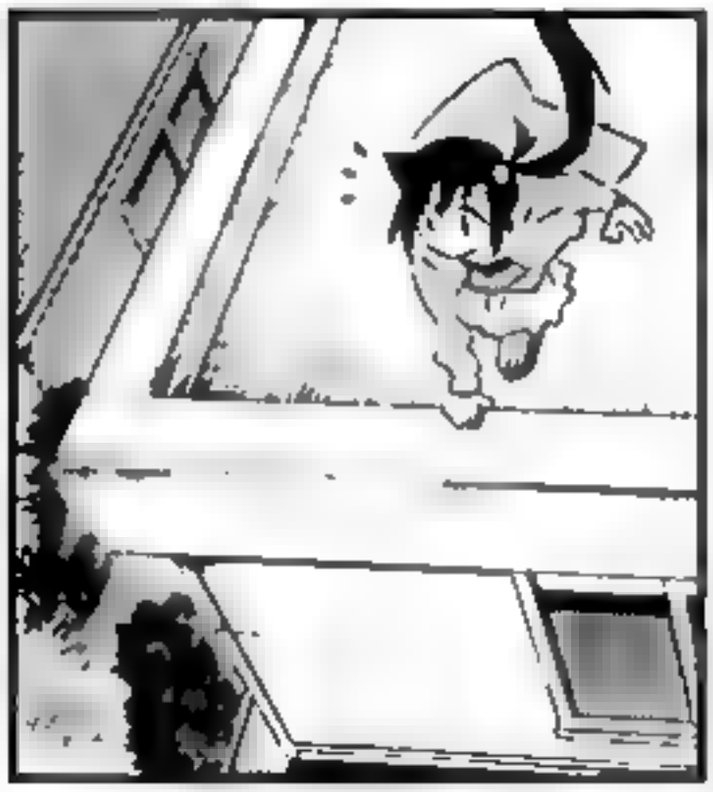
HM-MM?

MI— MIYAKO-CHAN! WAKE UP...

WAKE UP...

THIS CAN'T BE...!

MIYAKO-CHAN DOESN'T KNOW THAT PEOPLE CAN BE TURNED INTO YOKAI IF SHE FINDS OUT, KYOICHI'S COVER MIGHT BE BLOWN TOO.
SHE'S GOT A STRONG PERSONALITY, BUT SHE'S STILL A CHILD.



I FEEL LIKE I'VE GOTTEN MUCH BETTER AT FIGHTING, ESPECIALLY WITH ALL THE YOKAI EXTERMINATIONS. I SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE HIM ON MY OWN...!
THE WEASEL'S PROBABLY THE ONE WHO'S BEHIND EVERYTHING.

YOU'RE...!
WHY ARE YOU CARRYING THE TIGER?
AND YOUR PRESENCE...
WHAT... ARE YOU...?
DOESN'T FEEL LIKE A NORMAL LIVING BEING.
YOU'RE NEITHER A HUMAN NOR A YOKAI...

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, NATSUHO.

WHY, INDEED. KUFU-FUFU.

I DON'T FEEL AFRAID. HAVE I MET THIS PERSON BEFORE...?

I KNEW IT.

HOW DO YOU... KNOW MY NAME?

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DID SOMETHING TO MY FRIEND AYAKA-CHAN...!!

REGARDLESS, IT IS TOO SOON FOR YOU TO ENTER THE STAGE.

I CANNOT ALLOW YOU TO PASS.

...I SEE. SO IT WASN'T THE WEASEL WHO WAS BEHIND ALL THIS.

YOU'RE THE ONE...

SO WHAT IF I AM?

FUFU-
FU-
FU...

FUHYA-
HYAHYA-
HYAH...

WHAT
ARE
YOU

GOING
TO DO
ABOUT
IT?

...WHA—

WHAT ARE YOU WAVING YOUR SHEETS FOR?

AH, I SEE, IT'S NOT WORKING.
HUH...?

VERY WELL.
OPTICAL TRANSFORMATIONS NO LONGER WORK ON YOU...
YOUR SIXTH SENSE IS BETTER THAN I GAVE YOU CREDIT FOR, KUFUFU...

HOW ABOUT THIS?

WHA...
NO...

WHAT?

WHA—

WHA—
WHA—
WHA—
WHA—

WHAT...

HOW?

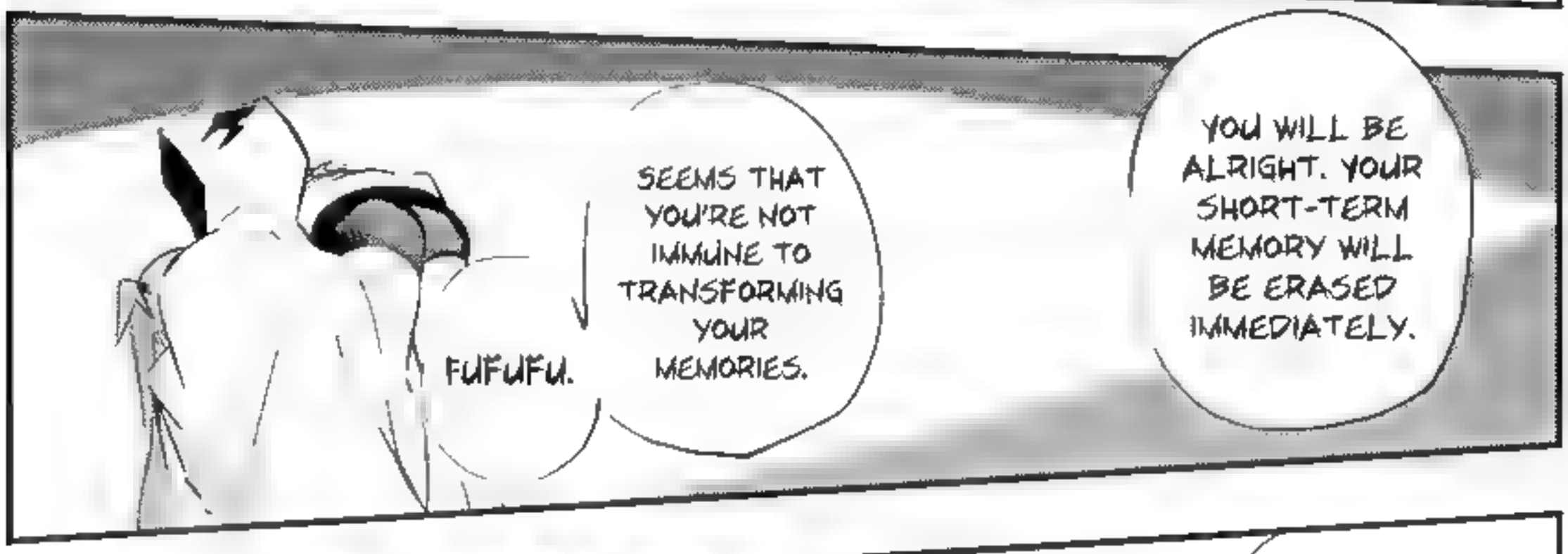
HUH?

WHAT?

HERE.

NAP TIME.

...GAH—


FUFUFU.
SEEMS THAT YOU'RE NOT IMMUNE TO TRANSFORMING YOUR MEMORIES.
YOU WILL BE ALRIGHT. YOUR SHORT-TERM MEMORY WILL BE ERASED IMMEDIATELY.

HYAH HYAH HYAH...
FUFUH, KUFU-FUFU...
GOOD NIGHT, NATSUHO.

ALL WIRELESS COMMUNICATION IN THE ENTIRE TWELVE CITY IS DOWN. I'VE NEVER SEEN SPIRITUAL INTERFERENCE ON THIS SCALE BEFORE.

I'M SO TIRED NOW. MAKES YOU REALLY REALIZE HOW DEPENDENT WE ARE ON CELL PHONES NOWADAYS.

THANKS FOR RUSHING HERE, TORIDERA-SAN.

THAT'S RIGHT.

LOOKS LIKE I CAN'T JOKE AROUND ANYMORE.

SHE DOESN'T LOOK THE SAME, BUT...

I SENT A FAMILIAR TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE OGRE...

IT'S USHIGURA, WITHOUT A DOUBT.

LUCKILY WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY CASUALTIES YET, BUT FROM WHAT I SAW THROUGH THE FAMILIAR, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME.

IT'S NOT JUST A MINOR INCONVE-NIENCE, IT'S AN IMMINENT DISASTER.

NOT JUST FOR THE TWELVE CLANS' SAKE,

BUT FOR HERS AS WELL.

WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING.

I DON'T WANT TO SAY SOME-THING LIKE THIS, BUT...

IN THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO...

I WILL SAY IT OUT LOUD, TO FORM MY OWN RESOLVE AS WELL.

MISS OX...

THE OGRE...

HAS TO BE EXTERMI-NATED...!

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ、ウラミコイ

CHAPTER 32: AN OGRE AND YET AN OX

YOU SHOULD KNOW...

NO... YOU'VE BEEN USHIGURA'S FRIEND FOR A LONG TIME, HAVEN'T YOU?

SORRY, BUT I GOTTA GET GOING...

WELL... UM...

WHY ARE YOU HERE, KYOICHI?

YES, AND NOT JUST ANY YOKAI, BUT AN ORIGINAL OGRE.

AYAKA...

MY BODY IS A BIT SPECIAL, AND I CAN FEEL A MASSIVE YOKAI AURA EVEN FROM ALL THE WAY HERE.

AYAKA BECAME A YOKAI!?

ZEN-SAN...!? ZEN-SAN...

KYOICHI, STAY IN MY HOUSE UNTIL EVERYTHING IS OVER.

I'M GOING TO GO HELP.

LIABILITY...!

I'M SORRY TO SAY THIS, BUT YOU'D JUST BE A LIABILITY. JUST STAY HERE.

I'M COMING TOO...!

THEN HOW ABOUT THIS!?

I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT ALL MY LIFE!!

KYOICHI... THIS POWER IS...

THIS IS...!

IF YOU KNOW WHERE AYAKA IS, THEN I'M COMING WITH YOU.

EVEN IF I HAVE TO DRAG MYSELF THERE...!

I SEE... HE MUST HAVE COME TO SEE ME AT THIS TIME OF THE NIGHT TO ASK ME ABOUT HIS YOKAI BODY.

I COULD SOMEWHAT SENSE THAT HE BECAME A YOKAI, BUT I HAD NO IDEA IT WAS TO THIS EXTENT.

A YOKAI POWER...!

CONTROL YOURSELF! DON'T GET SO HOT-HEADED! YOU'RE COMMITTING ENVIRONMENTAL TERRORISM FOR NO REASON!

BUT WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, YOU IDIOT!?

HEY KYOICHI, LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING.

SO I—

I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SAVE AYAKA...!

I CAN DO SOMETHING NOW.

WHAT YOU HAVE IS NOWHERE NEAR ENOUGH.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT TAKES TO FIGHT AN OGRE.

SO IN THE CASE OF AN OGRE,

A YOKAI'S STRENGTH LIES IN HOW STRONGLY AND WIDELY THEY'RE WORSHIPPED. OR FEARED.

ASHEN IRON, ERASER OF MOUNTAINS.

JUST THINK FOR A SECOND HOW POWERFUL AN OGRE MUST BE.

IT'S AN OBJECT OF FEAR WHOSE NAME CAN BE HEARD ACROSS THE LANDS.

MOVE AS ONE OF MY LIMBS.

IN A DISTANT LAND WHERE THE OGRES' NAME IS NOT KNOWN, AN OGRE WILL NOT HAVE ANY POWER.

BUT THIS CITY HAS A HISTORY OF FEARING THE MAN-EATING OGRES THAT LIVE AROUND IT.

IN OTHER WORDS,

ITS STRENGTH IS UNPARALLELED!

SO STRONG...!!

ARE YOU REALLY MAT FLIPPING?

SEN!

TOGETHER AS ONE!

BUT

EVEN IF IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, I HAVE TO PULL THROUGH SOMEHOW.

I CAN'T USE THE EXECUTION OF ENFORCEMENT ON SOMEONE WHO ISN'T CONSCIOUS.

WHERE'S BROTHER AND MISS CAT?

WE CAN'T COUNT ON ANY AID FROM THE OTHER CLANS WITH THIS ELECTRONIC WAVE DISRUPTION.

DO WE *HAVE* TO TAKE ACTION NOW?

BROTHER...

I SEE.

NEKOGAZAKI SEEMED TO HAVE LEFT, BUT KYOICHI-SAMA HAS NOT RETURNED YET.

IF SHE BECAME A YOKAI SOMEHOW BUT IS JUST WANDERING AIMLESSLY... COULDN'T WE WAIT UNTIL WE FIND A WAY TO TURN HER BACK TO NORMAL...?

AYAKA-CHAN IS A GOOD GIRL.

EEEEK I'M SORRY I'M SORRY

USHIGURA RESPONDS TO HOSTILITY AGAINST HER.

WE CAN'T. WE DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF LUXURY.

PLEASE!

PLEASE, JUST DON'T TAKE MY SAKE!

IT'S MY FAULT!

AND IF THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY REALIZE THAT SHE'S THE REASON FOR THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC WAVE INTER-FERENCE,

WE'RE LUCKY IN THAT WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY CASUALTIES YET, BUT IF WE GET ANY,

USHIGURA WILL BECOME THE TARGET OF THE HOSTILITY OF THE ENTIRE CITY.

AND SHE WILL SEE THE ENTIRE CITY AS HER ENEMY...!

IF THAT HAPPENS, THE CITY'S DONE FOR.

IT CRACKED...!?

BUT NEVER IN THE HISTORY OF ITS SERVITUDE TO THE NEKUNI CLAN DID IT EVER SO MUCH AS CHIP...

SO HARD...!!

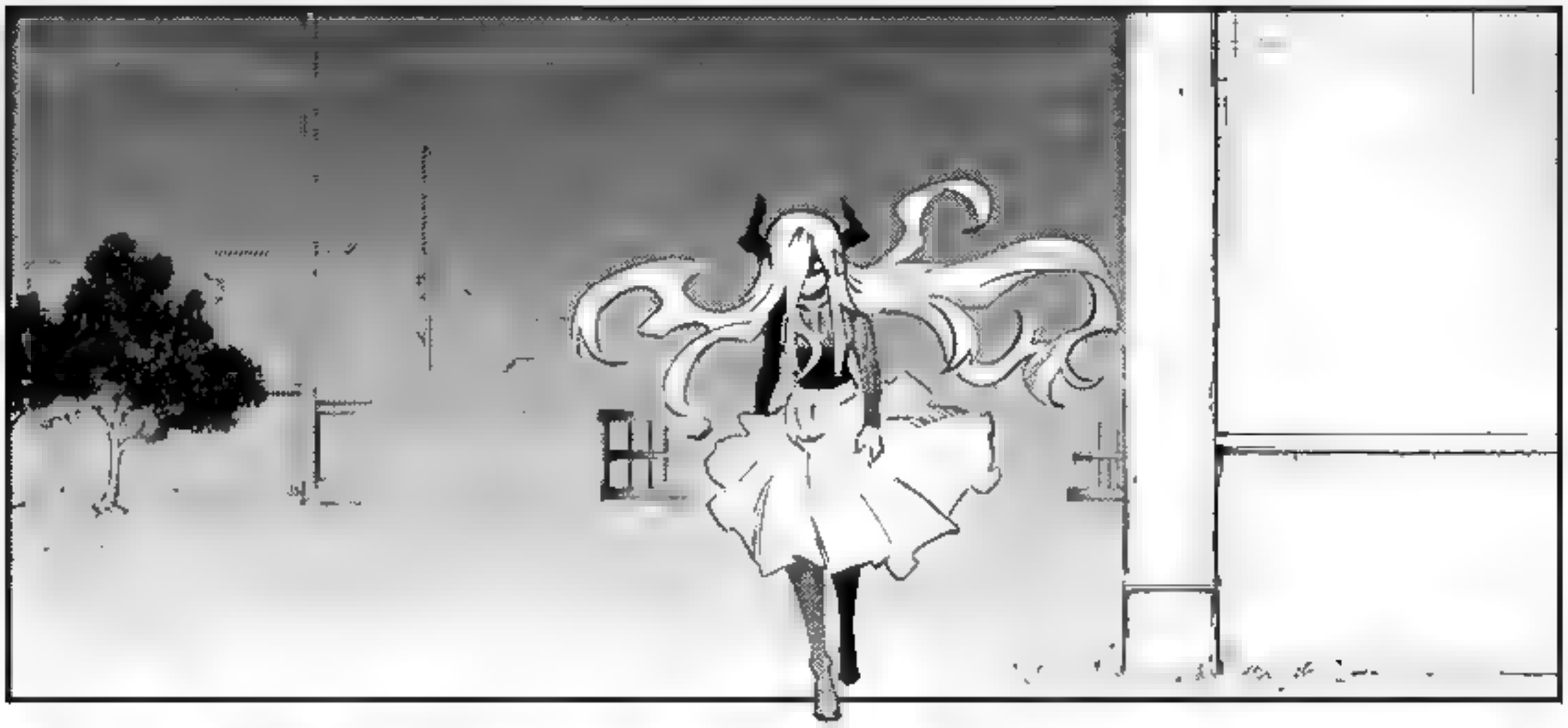
SEN!!

NO...!

...

ASHEN IRON!

(GASP)
(GASP)
SEN!
BUT I BROKE SEVERAL RIBS...
I WAS ABLE TO SOFTEN THE IMPACT BEFORE I CRASHED INTO THE WALL BY CUTTING IT DOWN...
I'M SORRY, MIYAKO-SAMA... BUT I CAN'T SAY THAT I AM...
SEN! ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?



BUT SHE HASN'T EVEN BROKEN A SWEAT.

SEN CAN'T MOVE, AND ASHEN IRON/IS CRACKED.

OGRES ARE TERRI-FYING.

MIYAKO-SAMA...

IT'S ALRIGHT, SEN. YOU DON'T HAVE TO MOVE ANYMORE.

ｱﾝﾏ

ﾘ

BECAUSE...

THANKS FOR WHAT YOU DID ALREADY.

THIS IS FINE.

OUR PLAN WORKED!!

YOU'RE ONLY AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE TRAP. THERE ARE MULTIPLE LAYERS OF OGRE SUPPRESSION TAGS SET UP IN THE DIRECTION YOU'RE MOVING.
YOUR NATURAL RESPONSE TO HOSTILITY IS TROUBLE-SOME, BUT WE USED IT TO OUR ADVANTAGE.
IF YOU HAVE A STIMULUS THAT YOU RESPOND TO, THEN THAT CAN BE USED TO BAIT YOU.
IT'S USELESS.

THE OGRE IS CAPTURED!

SHE LOOKS SO EXCITED.

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THE DAY THE NEKUNI WOULD USE A STRATEGY THIS CUTE.

A CLAN THAT EXTERMINATES ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING AT THE FIRST SIGHT OF TROUBLE IS TOO NARROW-MINDED.

I JUST HOPE THAT IT WORKS. I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS SOMETHING WE CAN FIGHT WITH JUST DIVERSIONS AND TRAPS.

ON TOP OF THAT,

IF I EXTERMINATED MISS OX, MY BROTHER WOULD HATE ME.

AND BESIDES, I CAN'T BE AS COLD AND DETACHED AS MY GRAND-FATHER.

WOW...! IT REALLY IS WORKING.

OF COURSE. HOW MUCH WORK DO YOU THINK I PUT INTO EACH OF THESE TAGS?

IF SANA AND CHIE WERE HERE, IT'D MAKE THINGS SO MUCH EASIER. WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

Grumble Grumble

OKAY, WE'VE BOUGHT OURSELVES SOME TIME AT LEAST.

I'M SORRY, MISS OX.

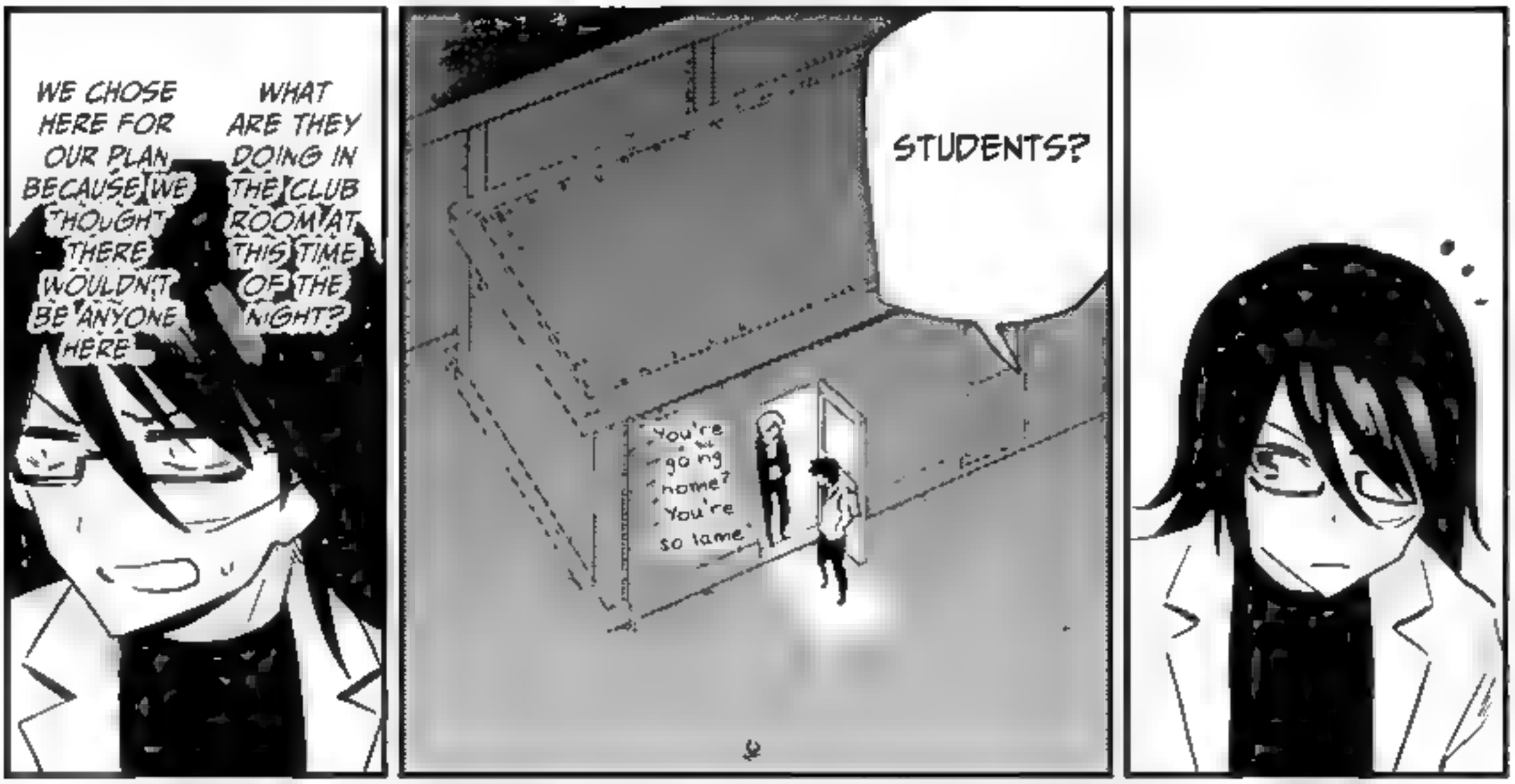
...

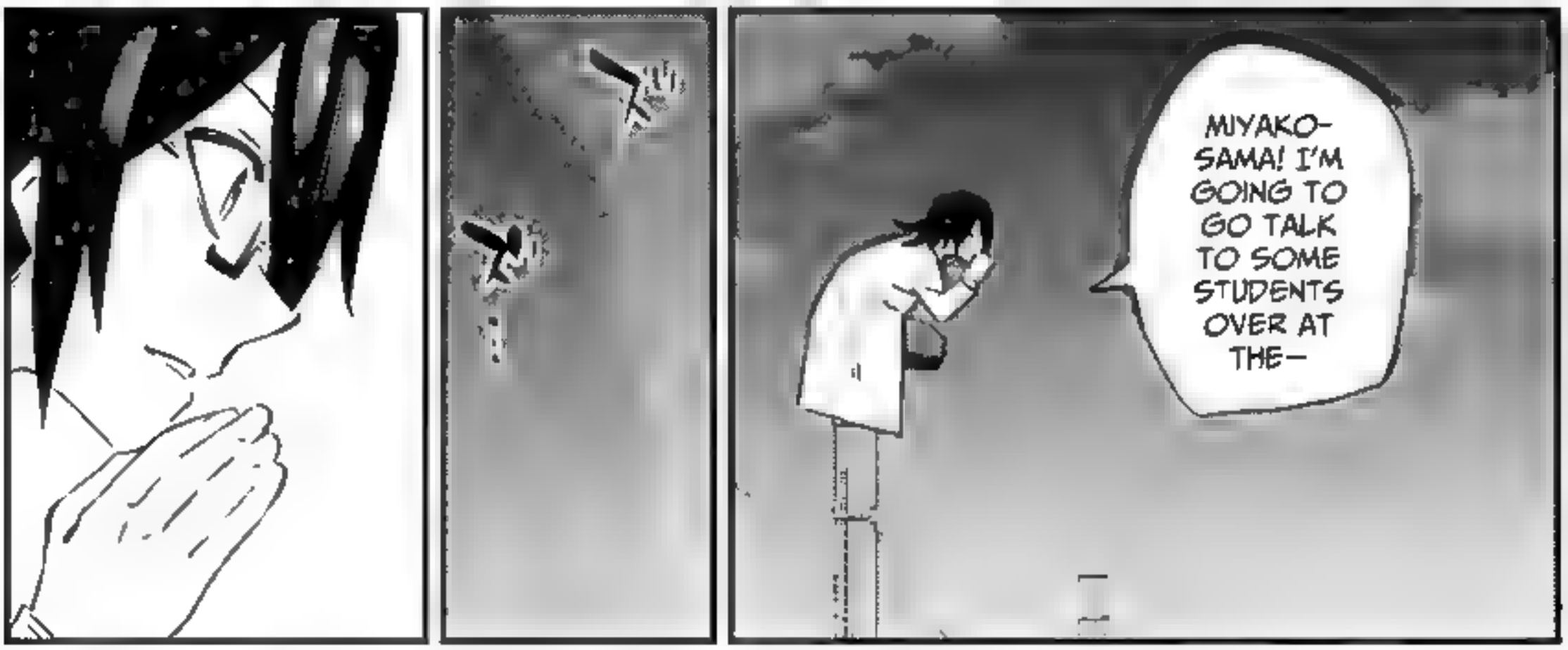
!!

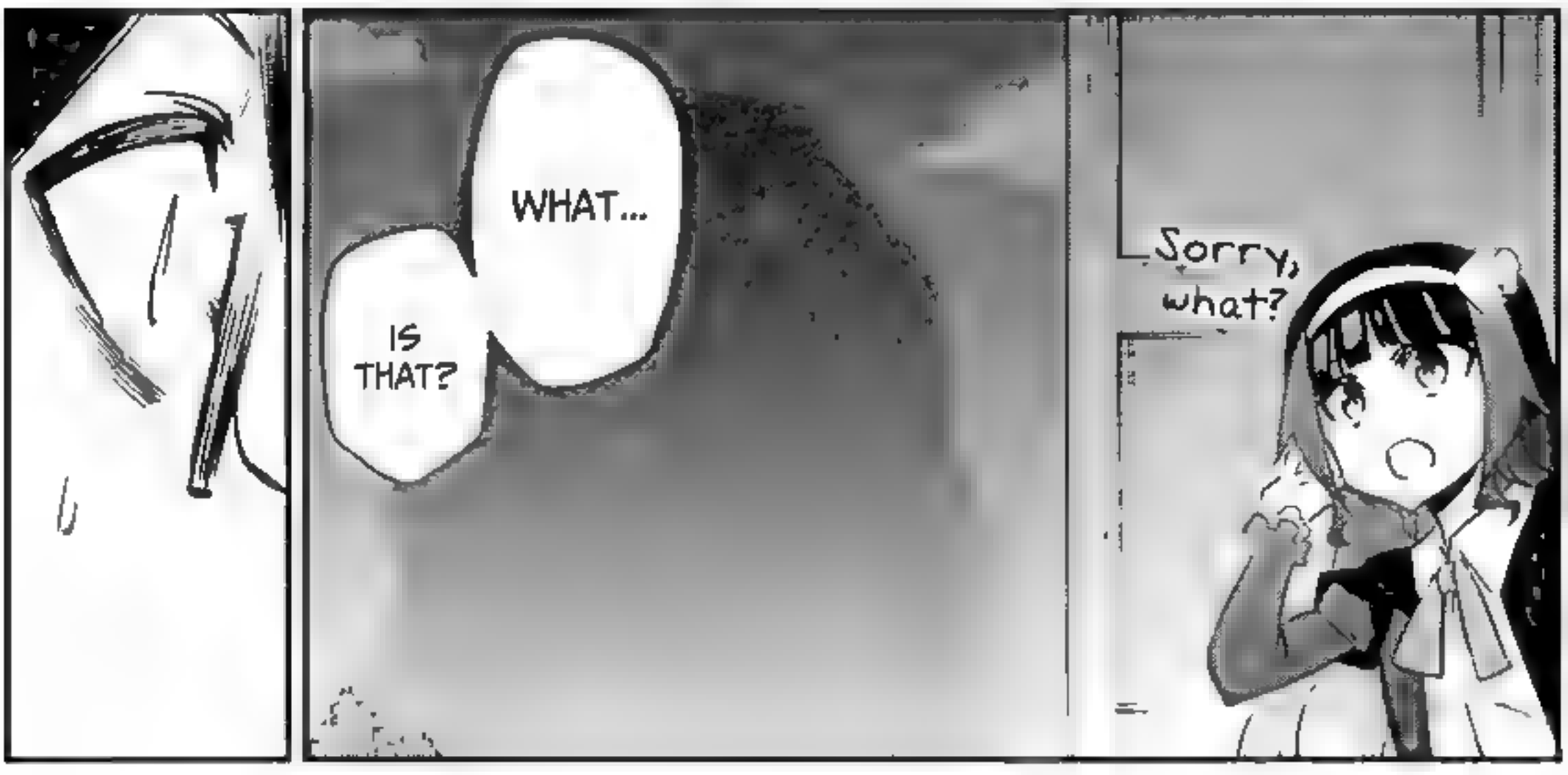
IT'LL ALL COME DOWN TO HOW FAST WE CAN FIND THE MASTERMIND BEHIND EVERYTHING...!

IF WE ARE TO BELIEVE MISS RABBIT'S WORDS, THERE'S A CULPRIT RESPONSIBLE FOR DOING THIS TO MISS OX.

THE TAGS SHOULD LAST A FEW DAYS, BUT THERE'S NO GUARANTEE.


WE CHOSE HERE FOR OUR PLAN BECAUSE WE THOUGHT THERE WOULDN'T BE ANYONE HERE
WHAT ARE THEY DOING IN THE CLUB ROOM AT THIS TIME OF THE NIGHT?
STUDENTS?
You're going home? You're so lame.


MIYAKO-SAMA! I'M GOING TO GO TALK TO SOME STUDENTS OVER AT THE—


WHAT...
IS THAT?
Sorry, what?

DAMN IT!

MISTER ROOSTER!?

YOU TWO, STAY BEHIND ME!

WHOA! WHAT'S GOING ON?

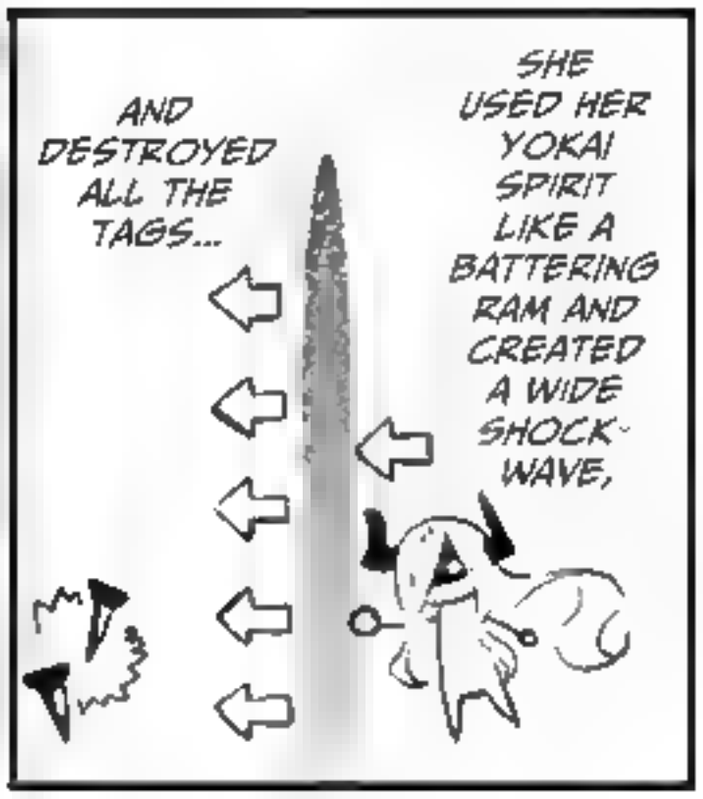
YOU IDIOTS!

LEMME TAKE A PICTURE!

OH, I KNOW HER! SHE'S THE YOUNG HEAD!

POSSI-
BLE...

IM...


AND DESTROYED ALL THE TAGS...
SHE USED HER YOKAI SPIRIT LIKE A BATTERING RAM AND CREATED A WIDE SHOCK-WAVE,

THAT'S CHEATING...

HNNG...?

HUH?
SEN?

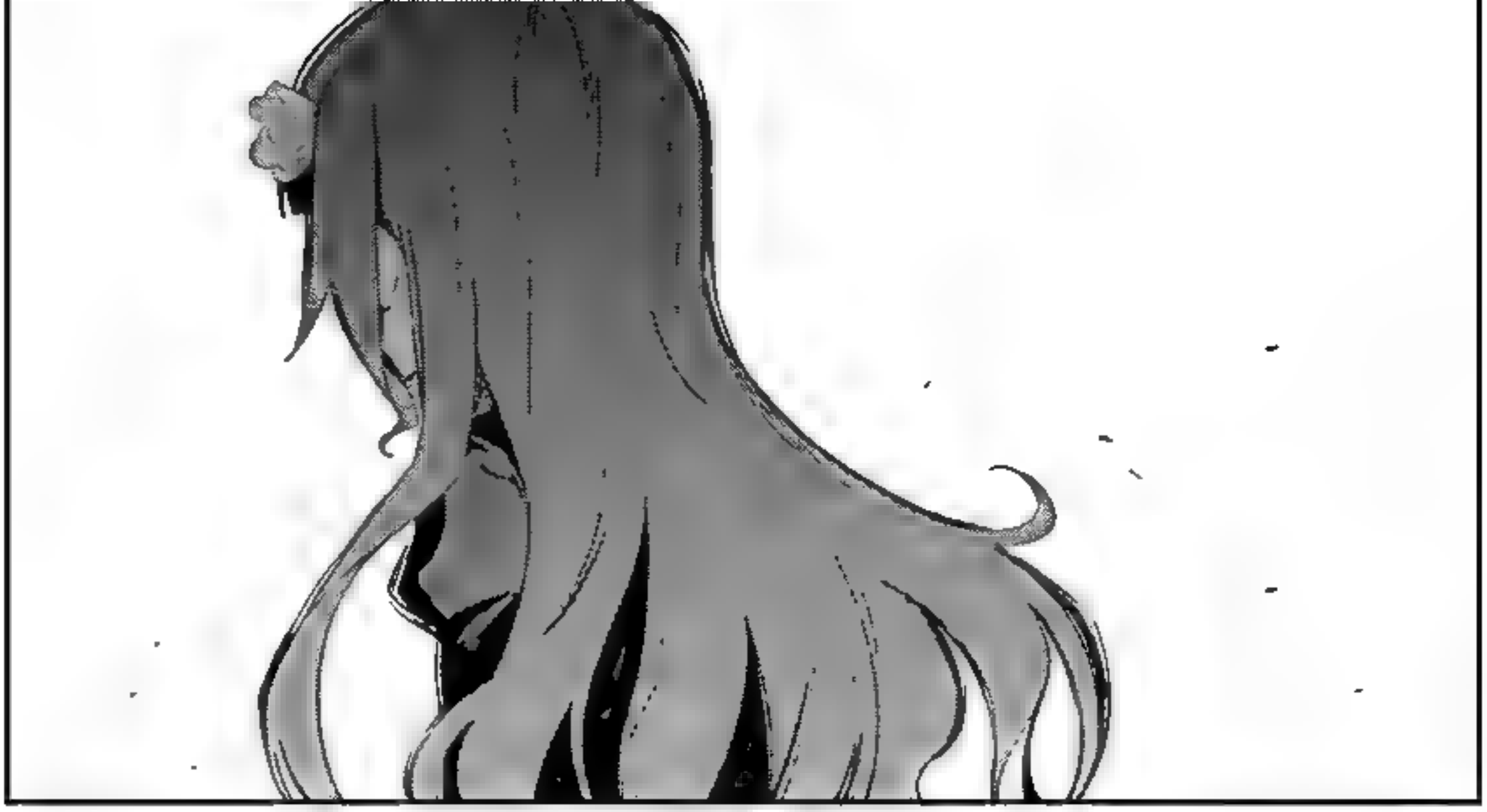
MY EARS ARE RINGING...
MY HEAD IS IN A HAZE!...

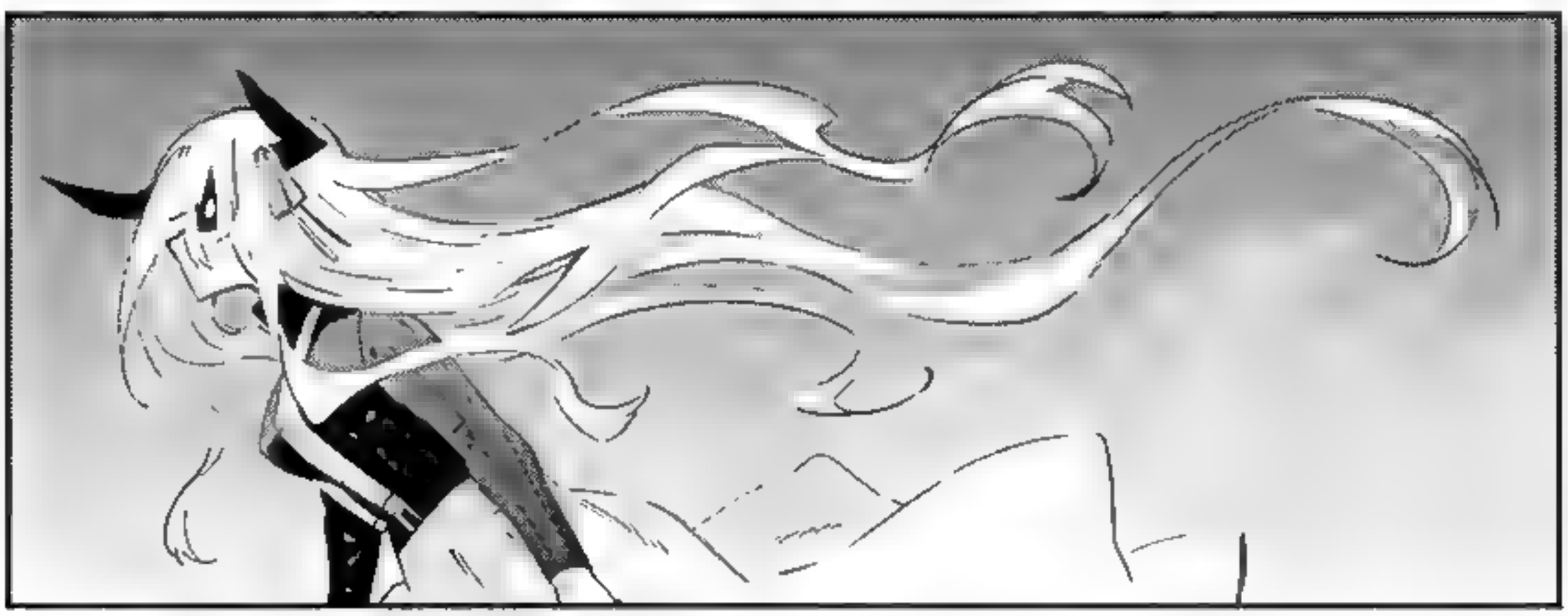
SE...

WHAT ABOUT THOSE PEOPLE...?

MISTER ROOSTER...

SHE'S BREATHING





AHooo

SEN...

MISTER
ROOSTER...

ASHEN IRON.

THIS IS ALL MY FAULT, ISN'T IT?

MISS OX...

NO,

THE OGRE

WILL BE EXTERMI-NATED!!

COULD YOU PLEASE WAIT A BIT?

AYAKA IS A CLOSE FRIEND OF MINE.

WHAT...!?

...!?

AND SHE STOPPED ITS PUNCH WITH JUST HER LEG...!?

WHEN DID SHE...!?

SKANDA...?

AND TO STOP HER FROM BEING MURDERED...

TO STOP AYAKA FROM BECOMING A MURDERER,

AM HERE TO BE RELIED ON!

I, HARUNA MASAKA, HEAD OF THE MASAKA CLAN,

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ、ウラミコイ

CHAPTER 33: ASK THE HORSE AND THE OGRE WILL STOP

MASAKA...!?

YOU'RE MIYAKO-CHAN FROM THE NEKUNI CLAN, RIGHT?

SHE'S THE HEAD OF THE MASAKA CLAN...!

YOU SHOULD GET BACK.

SHE KNOCKED HER ARM BACK...!!

MASAKA CLAN INHERITED TECHNIQUE:

LIGHT BLADE KICK!!

EACH YEAR, A DIFFERENT ONE OF THE TWELVE CLANS RECEIVES THE BLESSING OF STRENGTH FROM THE GOD OF THE LAND.

THEIR ABILITY BECOMES CLOSER TO THAT OF A GOD.

AND THE ABILITY OF THE BLESSED CLAN FAR SURPASSES THOSE OF THE OTHER CLANS...!!

THAT'S RIGHT... THIS YEAR'S BLESSED CLAN IS...!

AMAZING...!

THIS IS THE MASAKAS' YEAR!

IF WE COMBINE OUR STRENGTH, WE CAN EXTERMINATE THE OGRE...!

GRANDFATHER TOLD ME TO BE WARY OF THE MASAKA CLAN, BUT NOW'S NOT THE TIME.

WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO THIS.

I'LL LEND YOU A HAND.

TH—THEN YOU HAVE A PLAN, RIGHT? LIKE HOW TO TURN HER BACK TO NORMAL?

WHAT?

NO, I'M NOT GOING TO EXTERMINATE HER.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME TO BUY YOU SOME TIME, THOUGH.

LIKE I JUST SAID, I'M HERE TO MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T GET KILLED.

NOPE, NOT AT ALL.

I'M NOT GOING TO LET MY FRIEND BECOME A MURDERER, EITHER.

I SAVED THOSE STUDENTS.

P— PEOPLE WERE KILLED JUST NOW...! BUYING TIME WON'T—

IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO BE JUST BUYING TIME...!

BUT IF WE WERE EVEN A LITTLE LESS LUCKY, PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE DIED...

I'LL THANK YOU BECAUSE SO FAR EVERYTHING TURNED OUT TO BE ALRIGHT...

SO,

WE HAVE TO EXTERMINATE THE OGRE AS FAST AS POSSIBLE, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE, FOR THE SAKE OF THIS CITY!

IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HELP, GET OUT OF MY WAY...!

IF YOU'RE NOT GETTING OUT OF MY WAY, I'LL MAKE YOU!

NO!

...IS THERE NOT A LESS VIOLENT WAY?

WHY...

I WON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN...!

HUH?

WHY ARE YOU SO DISTRAUGHT?

WHA—

WHAT ARE YOU TALK-

WHEN DID SHE GET BEHIND ME...!?

...

AH!!

...SORRY.

BUT I CAN'T LET MY BEST FRIEND GET KILLED.

AH...

IS IT BECAUSE MIYAKO-CHAN IS UNCONSCIOUS NOW...?

...? SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE SLOWED DOWN...

AYAKA! HOLD ON A SECOND!

...MAYBE.

DON'T YOU THINK YOU COULD'VE TRIED A LITTLE HARDER TO CONVINCE HER?

...IT MIGHT'VE BEEN BECAUSE OF HER BROTHER.

BUT SHE WAS DISTRAUGHT ABOUT SOMETHING, AND LOOKED LIKE SHE'D KILL AYAKA AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

I DON'T THINK SHE REALIZED HOW DISTRAUGHT SHE WAS HERSELF, THOUGH.

AND SHE CALLED AYAKA AN OGRE.

IT LOOKED LIKE SHE'D ALREADY MADE UP HER RESOLVE, AND I DON'T THINK I COULD HAVE PERSUADED HER.

HE'S SOMEONE WHO'D DIVE HEAD FIRST INTO SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

SHE PROBABLY WANTED TO FINISH IT BEFORE HE GOT HERE.

...YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT.

...WELL THEN, NOW THAT I'M BEING RELIED UPON...

NO, MORE LIKE I FORCED HER TO RELY ON ME, SO I HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT NOW.

SHE'S SO YOUNG, AND SHE'S ALREADY...

IS SHE REACTING TO SOME-THING...?

SHE SLOWED DOWN ABRUPTLY.

I DON'T THINK I CAN FORCE HER IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION...

BUT SHE KEEPS WALKING AS IF SHE'S DETERMINED TO GO SOMEWHERE.

AND THEN INTO THE HEART OF THE CITY...

LOOKS LIKE SHE'S HEADED TOWARD THE RESIDENTIAL AREA PAST THIS SCHOOL.

...I GUESS I HAVE TO JUST BUY TIME AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS.

REGARDLESS, THIS SCHOOL-YARD IS STILL THE BEST PLACE TO STOP HER...!

I'LL BE FINE.

I LIKE BEING RELIED ON MORE THAN RELYING ON SOMEONE ELSE.

IF YOU GET IN TROUBLE, YOU SHOULD SERIOUSLY LET ME KNOW.

I'M SORRY, AYAKA.

AS LONG AS I CAN STAND, I'M NOT LETTING YOU PAST ME.

I'LL TREAT YOU TO A PARFAIT AND WE'LL CALL IT EVEN FOR ME KICKING YOU.

I FOUND A GREAT CAFE.

I NEED TO EXTERMINATE USHIGURA ALONG WITH IT.
IF I'M TO STOP THE OGRE,

IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MASAKA IS TRYING TO EXTERMINATE HER,
BUT WE HAVE NO WAY OF TURNING USHIGURA BACK TO NORMAL.

SO IT'S A CRUEL FATE, BUT IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO EXTERMINATE USHIGURA BEFORE ANYONE BECOMES A CASUALTY.
THERE IS A WAY TO RIP THE OGRE OUT OF HER TEMPORARILY, BUT TURNING HER BACK TO NORMAL ISN'T THAT EASY.

THAT THING THAT'S FIGHTING MASAKA ON EVEN FOOTING IS THE OGRE.

KYOICHI,

BUT I DON'T SEE HOW I CAN CONVINCE KYOICHI...

TO SEE HIS GOOD FRIEND KILLED BEFORE HIS EYES...

EVEN IF I DID FEEL RESPONSIBLE, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A MISTAKE TO TELL KYOICHI WHAT HAPPENED.

I DIDN'T THINK HE'D BE ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH ME...

!?

SORRY, BUT I HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH THIS GEEZER HERE DON'T BE LOWERING YOUR HEAD LIKE THAT, JUST HEAD ON HOME.

ZEN-SAN, CAN'T YOU... DO SOME-THING?

IS THERE REALLY NOTHING WE CAN DO?

LIKE THAT TIME YOU DID SOMETHING TO ME...

MY ABILITY LETS ME DISPEL THE TARGET'S ABILITY.

BUT THAT'S NOT THE SAME AS REMOVING IT.

I CAN TEMPORARILY DISPEL THE OGRE AND RIP IT OUT OF HER.

BUT ITS EXISTENCE IS STILL CONNECTED TO USHIGURA.

AS LONG AS USHIGURA IS ALIVE, EVEN IF WE KILL IT, IT'LL JUST REGENERATE ITSELF AND RETURN TO HER.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO TURN HER BACK TO NORMAL.

THEN AYAKA...

WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO HAVE FUN TOGETHER...?

THEN AYAKA- WILL ALWAYS STAY THIS WAY...?

I NEVER ASKED HER HOW SHE REALLY FELT EITHER...

...NOW I HAVE TO CONVINCE MASAKA SOMEHOW...

IT'S SAD, BUT I SHOULDN'T GIVE HIM ANY FALSE HOPE, EITHER...

WHA—

WHAT ARE YOU DOING!? ARE YOU A FOOL...!?

YEAH, I'M A FOOL...

THIS IS NO TIME TO BE MOPING AROUND

WHEN AYAKA IS IN THAT KIND OF STATE...!!

I'LL TRY EVERY-THING...!!

TELL ME ANYTHING THAT HAS ANY REMOTE CHANCE OF WORKING...!

I'LL DO ANYTHING TO SAVE AYAKA...!!

AND YET THESE DAMN KIDS...!!

THEY KNOW IT'S HOPELESS...

UM...

YES.

AM I MORE OR LESS RIGHT?

KYOICHI, YOUR ABILITY LETS YOU CONTROL SPIRITUAL RATS AND DEVOUR THINGS...

HUH...? UM, ABOUT EIGHT TO NINE YEARS OLD, I THINK.

...HOW OLD WAS THE OTHER KYOICHI?

IT WAS EXPLAINED TO ME IN A DREAM BY ANOTHER ME FROM THE PAST...

AND YOUR PAST SELF TAUGHT YOU YOUR ABILITY...

YOUR ABILITY TOOK ITS FORM FROM YOUR NEGATIVE IMAGE OF THE NEKUNI CLAN AND RATS, MOST LIKELY...

HE'S THE KYOICHI FROM WHEN HE JUST LOST HIS PARENTS...

AND THIS ABILITY...

THEN THAT MEANS...

IF HE'S EIGHT TO NINE YEARS OLD!

IT'S GUT CHECK TIME.

IT USED TO BE A ONE IN A MILLION CHANCE, BUT NOW THAT THE ODDS IMPROVED TO ONE IN A HUNDRED CHANCE...

10%

ZEN-SAN, WHAT...?

HUH?

LET'S DO IT, KYOICHI.

AND YOU'RE THE KEY, IT'LL BE ALL UP TO YOU...

THIS IS AN ABSURD, IMPOSSIBLE PLAN...!

OUR ODDS ARE SLIM! WE DON'T KNOW IF THIS CAN EVEN WORK!

WE'RE GOING TO SAVE USHIGURA FROM THE OGRE.

IF YOU TAKE IN THE OGRE AND ERASE IT FROM EXISTENCE, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO IT...!

AND AN OGRE CREATED BASED ON THE OX CAN'T EXIST WITHOUT THE OX...!

FOR YOU TO DEVOUR SOMETHING MEANS YOU HAVE TO TAKE IT INTO YOURSELF.

THE PLAN MIGHT FAIL BECAUSE OF ME BEFORE IT EVEN GETS TO YOU!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO YOU, EITHER!

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO CARRIES A GREAT RISK!

BUT IF YOU'RE WILLING TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS, I'LL BE WITH YOU TO THE END.

ARE YOU READY!?

OF COURSE!!

SO...

BUT THE WAY YOU ARE RIGHT NOW, YOU'RE TOTALLY WORTHLESS.

...ALRIGHT!

OUR ENEMY IS THE OGRE. IF ALL YOU CAN DO IS EAT SOME SHRUBBERY NEARBY, WE'LL BE THE ONES THAT GET EATEN INSTEAD.

GAAH! CALM YOUR-SELF!!

H-H-HOLD ON! THEN HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO SAVE AYAKA!?

H-

SO GO SEE THE MINI-KYOICHI AND TALK TO HIM.

...LISTEN, I HAVE TO TALK TO YOU.

WELL, YOU'RE NOT WRONG, BUT...

I THOUGHT I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GET HERE WITHOUT DOING THIS...

WHY DO I HAVE A LUMP ON MY HEAD?

WHY SHOULD I FEEL THE NEED TO SAVE HER?

I JUST MET THAT VIOLENT HAG NOT THAT LONG AGO.

WHA...!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? DON'T YOU WANNA SAVE AYAKA!?

THIS JUST GOT A LOT HARDER.

JUST LIKE ZEN-SAN SAID, THIS WAS BACK WHEN I HAD JUST RAN AWAY AND WHEN MY IMAGE OF AYAKA WAS NEGATIVE...

WAH...

...BUT I GUESS EVEN IF I TOLD YOU THAT, I DON'T THINK YOU'D JUST TURN AND WALK AWAY.

JUST GIVE UP ALREADY.

...!?

I DON'T WANNA DIE BECAUSE OF YOUR SUICIDAL GAMBLE.

SO THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO.

TALK TO HIM...!?

THIS IS SUCH A HASSLE.

BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT HE'S THAT POWERFUL...?

IF YOU ARE TO USE THE ABILITY THAT ORIGINATED FROM YOUR NEGATIVE IMAGE OF THE CLAN TO ITS FULLEST EXTENT YOU NEED HIS COOPERATION.

I'M GUESSING THAT THE OTHER KYOICHI IS FROM WHEN YOU HATED YOURSELF AND THE NEKUNI.

THE USE OF THE EXECUTION OF ENFORCEMENT, WHICH BENDS PEOPLE'S WILL WITH JUST WORDS, REQUIRES A GREAT AMOUNT OF SPIRITUAL ENERGY...

THE NEKUNI CLAN'S ABILITY IS THE CLOSEST TO THAT OF A GOD ASIDE FROM THE YEARLY BLESSED CLAN.

YOU WERE PROBABLY RESTING FOR SO LONG BECAUSE OF THE IMMENSE AMOUNT OF ENERGY BEING CONVERTED.

YOU WERE UNABLE TO USE THAT IMMENSE SPIRITUAL ENERGY BECAUSE OF OUTSIDE CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT THAT HAS NOW ALL BEEN CONVERTED TO YOKAI ENERGY.

HEY, HOW ABOUT I TAKE OVER YOUR BODY?

THERE IS A MONSTER LIVING INSIDE OF YOU!

NO WAY...

AT

SHE DIDN'T EVEN BUDGE...!?

MASAKA!

AND-I'M THE ONE BEING PUSHED BACK...!?

LOOK UP!

THAT'S...!!

...!!

BUT I DIDN'T THINK SHE'D HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

I THOUGHT SHE WAS TOYING WITH ME WITH THE AMOUNT OF YOKAI ENERGY SHE WAS USING...

OH, COME ON, TOYA-KUN. YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO SAY IT LIKE THAT...

YOU'RE TOO HONEST FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.

THAT'S WHY I SAID YOU SHOULD HAVE JUST TOLD THE NEKUNI A HALF-TRUTH OR SOMETHING AND FOUGHT TOGETHER.

BUT I HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ROLE THAT I'VE TAKEN ON.

A TOTAL OF SIX LIMBS... SO IT'S NOT JUST AN ORDINARY OGRE!!

...WELL, I'VE BEEN SADDLED WITH SOME IMPOSSIBLE ODDS...

I'LL STICK WITH YOU FOR AS LONG AS YOU WANT,

AYAKA...!

I'M FAR FROM GIVING UP ON YOU...!!

WHAT...?

HUH?

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ、ウラミコイ

I'M SORRY, BUT ALL THE NEKUNI PROPERTIES ARE BIG.

WE LIVE BELOW YOU, SO UNTIL YOU CAN COOK FOR YOURSELF, COME EAT WITH US.

I KNOW YOU JUST LOST YOUR PARENTS, AND IT'LL BE TOUGH LIVING BY YOURSELF, BUT STAY STRONG, OKAY?

...I WILL.

...THERE'S TOO MUCH SPACE.

CHAPTER 34: THE COWERING RAT BITES THE RAT ONCE AGAIN

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE IT A LITTLE EASY ON ME...?

AYAKA...

HUMPH!

IT'S SO HARD...

THE MASAKA CLAN'S ABILITY IS SUPER SPEED AND AGILITY.

I NEED TO FIGHT BACK AND HOLD HER IN PLACE...

BUT I-CAN'T JUST RUN AWAY.

AS LONG AS I HAVE MY SPEED, I CAN DODGE HER ATTACKS.

LIGHT BLADE BARRAGE KICK!!

SHE DIDN'T BUDGE AT ALL...!?

THAT'S NOT GOOD...!

I SEE... SHE'S USING HER CLAWS LIKE A WEDGE TO ANCHOR HERSELF...!

Y... YOU'RE...!

THANKS FOR HOLDING ON, MASAKA...!

HUH? WHY DID SHE GET WEAK ALL OF A SUDDEN?

TH... THANK YOU...

I GOT YOUR BACK...!!

BUT WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO IS...

DO YOU WANT TO HELP?

I'M HERE NOT TO EXTERMINATE USHIGURA, BUT TO SAVE HER FROM THE OGRE.

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT.

...YES!

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING? YOU HAD ME WORRIED YOU WERE GONNA KEEP FIGHTING UNTIL NEXT YEAR.

SO YOU WERE BUYING TIME BECAUSE YOU KNEW ABOUT TATSUGA.

HUH?

I'm so out of shape...

IF ANYONE'S GOT A PLAN, IT'D BE HIM.

BUT THERE'S A REASON WHY I DIDN'T SAY ANYTH.NG.

YOU HAVE SUCH AN ANNOYING QUIRK...

SO IF I SAID OUT LOUD THAT I CAN COUNT ON TATSUGA-SAN, I MIGHT'VE GOTTEN WEAK!

IF I RELY ON ANYONE ELSE, I CAN'T USE MY FULL STRENGTH.

Saved + cool entrance = dependable Tatsuga

SLUMP

TADAAA

BUT I LIKE BEING DEPENDED ON MORE THAN DEPENDING ON OTHERS.

SO IF YOU COULD RELY ON ME AS A DECOY OR COMMAND ME, WHATEVER'S THE MOST USEFUL TO YOU, THAT'D BE GREAT!

THANK YOU FOR TAKING ACTION ON BEHALF OF AYAKA, TATSUGA-SAN...!

I DON'T GET IT AT ALL!

Is she a masochist?

...

GOT IT!

?

WHO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...?

AND ONCE HE'S UP, WE'LL START THE PLAN!

BUT-IT LOOKS LIKE HER ENERGY'S BACK...!

SAVE YOUR DIVINE POWER UNTIL THEN!

FOR NOW, WE NEED TO KEEP BUYING TIME.

HE'LL BE FINE. HE'S A YOKAI THAT I CREATED.

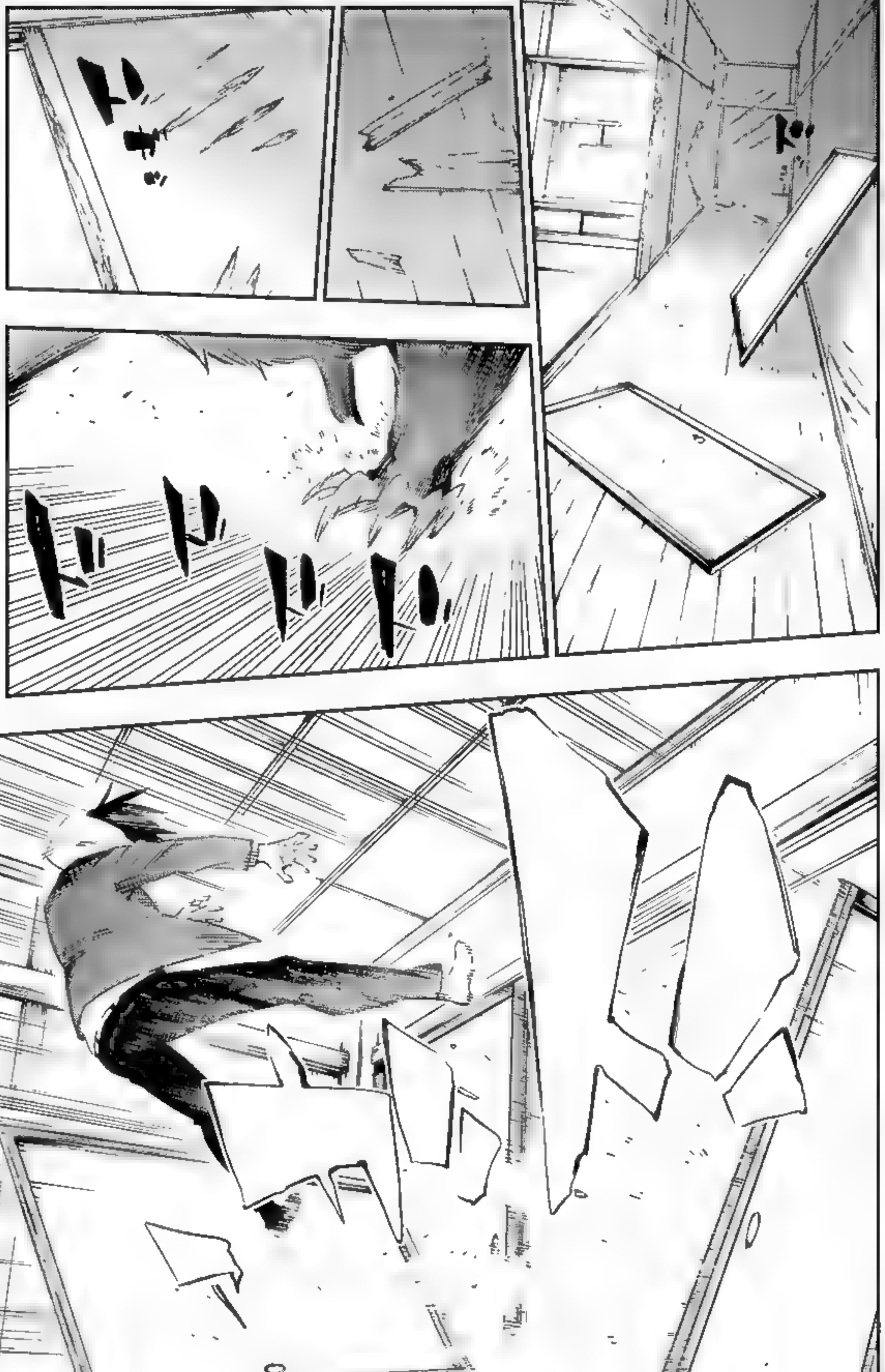
WHA— IS HE OKAY?

LOOKS LIKE HE'S UNCON-SCIOUS, THOUGH.

HE'S TALKING ABOUT MIYAKO NEKUNI'S BROTHER. HE'S NEARBY.

AND BESIDES, HE'S MADDENINGLY TOUGH.

HE'LL SHOW UP BEFORE LONG.



WHY DO YOU KEEP GETTING BACK UP?

I'M ONLY GONNA TAKE OVER FOR A BIT, YOU KNOW.

WHY DON'T YOU GIVE UP?

AND BESIDES, YOU'RE NOTHING COMPARED TO THE LAST MONSTER THAT ATTACKED ME.

WHAT GOOD WILL TELLING YOU DO...?

IF YOU WANNA HUNT DOWN A RAT, BRING THE HATEFUL CAT OR SOMETHING!!

SHUT IT!!

I CAN'T...

I CAN'T GIVE -UP!

WHO COULD IT BE?

THAT LADY FROM DOWN-STAIRS?

DING

DONG

COME ON, AYAKA! DON'T LEAVE DADDY BEHIND!

TODAY.

I'M NOT GONNA PUMMEL YA...

WH-WHAT DID YOU CO-

WHAT!?

OH, WE ALREADY TOLD GOICHI-SAN THAT WE'D BE HERE, BY THE WAY.

HERE! OUR GIFT TO YOU!

GOOD EVENING! WE CAME TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH YOU!

UM... WHAT ARE YOU...

OH, YOUR CURTAIN ISN'T UP YET. IT'LL GET BRIGHT IN THE MORNING, SO LET'S DO THAT NOW.

PARDON ME!

WHY ARE YOU SITTING THERE...?

That's the table.

おいし…

...ACTJALLY,

WE'RE HERE BECAUSE...

UH- WHA- WHAT ARE YOU...

AND WHAT IS THAT...

SHE'S PROBABLY JUST BEING SHY AND DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH HERSELF... BECAUSE IT'S HER FIRST TIME IN A BOY'S APARTMENT.

AYAKA KEPT SAYING THAT YOU'D BE LONELY BY YOURSELF, AND WOULDN'T STOP UNTIL WE CAME HERE.

AAAAH, YOU'RE SO CUTE! I'M GONNA TAKE A PICTURE!

AYAKAAAA! LOOK THIS WAYYY!

Please

Listen to me I didn't break it. please don't take away my allowance

..BUT...

AYAKA AND HER FATHER ARE ALWAYS NICE TO ME.

THEY'RE NOT MY FAMILY.

CAN'T FALL ASLEEP, KYOICHI?

NNN-GH...

BUT...I'M CRYING AGAIN...

I SAID I'D MAKE HIM EAT HIS WORDS.

NO!..

NNN-GH...

OOOOOO-OOOWW-WWWW!!!

HOLDIN' BACK'S HARD...

ERM...

...MY BAD.

OH!

NOW...?

HOW 'BOUT...

GOOD NIGHT.

THE STORY OF HOW THE TWELVE CLANS STARTED SAYS THAT THE OX WAS IN THE LEAD FOR MOST OF THE RACE,

BUT THE RAT RODE ON THE OX'S BACK AND BEAT IT RIGHT AT THE END...

IS THE RAT... A BAD GUY...?

I DON'T THINK SO.

AND MY BEST FRIEND IS YUSEI, THE HEAD OF THE USHIGURA CLAN.

IF THAT WERE TRUE, THEN THE USHIGURA CLAN AND THE NEKUNI CLAN WOULDN'T BE THIS CLOSE.

HE CARRIED HIS FRIEND, WHO COULDN'T WALK ANYMORE, AND WANTED HIM TO GO FIRST.

I THINK MISTER OX WAS JUST REALLY, REALLY KIND.

AND IN RETURN, THE RAT SHOULD BE RETURNING THAT KINDNESS OF BEING CARRIED SOMEDAY.

THAT'S WHAT I THINK.

I'VE ALWAYS...

THAT'S RIGHT.

YOU PEST... HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP THIS UP...!?

JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE THE ORIGINAL...

ALWAYS...

DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T KILL YOU!!

...!!

TAKE IT...

NNN-GGGH...

NGH...

!!??

I'LL GIVE UP CONTROL OF MY RIGHT ARM...

IT'S COLLATERAL... NOW HAND OVER ALL OF YOUR POWER...!

I NEED AN ARM TO GRAB HER.

SORRY, BUT THIS IS ALL I CAN GIVE YOU.

A-ARE YOU AN IDIOT? WHY WOULD I AGREE TO SOMETHING LIKE...

TO CARRY HER ON MY BACK.

I NEED TWO LEGS

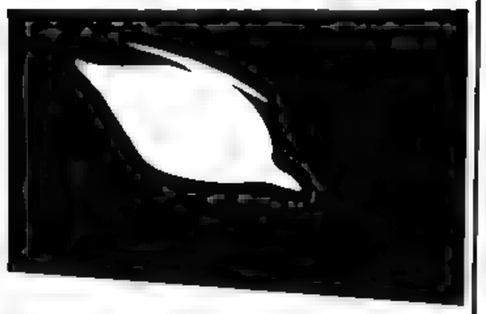
SHE'S CARRIED ME ALL THIS TIME...

AND NOW IT'S MY TURN...!

NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU KILL ME...

I WON'T BACK DOWN...

I CAN'T GIVE UP! I WON'T GIVE UP!!



I'M DONE WITH BEING A FAILURE.

YOU UNDER STAND

WHAT I WANT, AND WHAT I WANT TO GET BACK.

FINE. JUST FOR A BIT.

I'LL GIVE YOU EVERYTHING.

DO IT FOR ME.

WHAT I WANT TO TAKE BACK...

MY REGRET...

THIS TIME...!

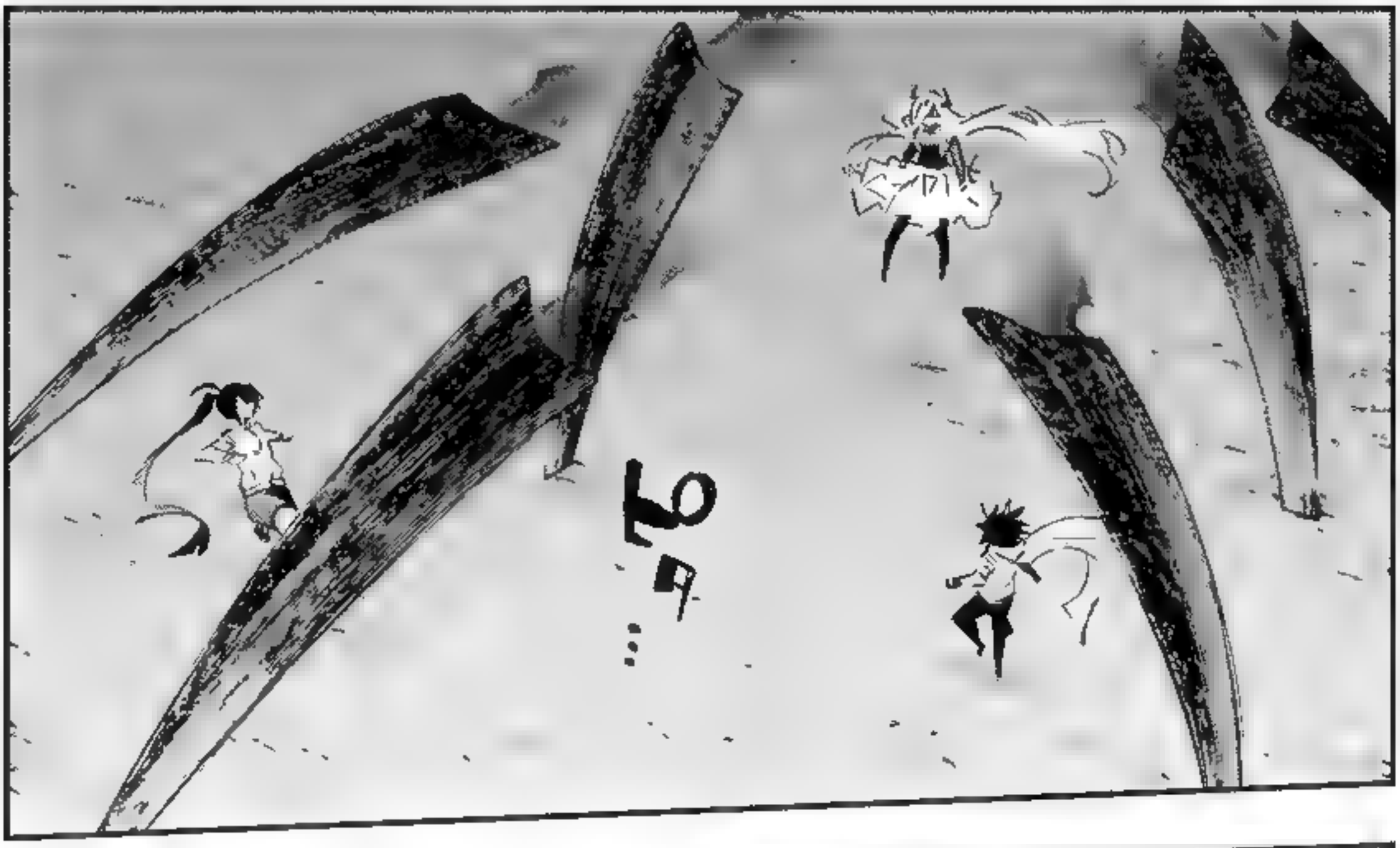
WHAT I COULDN'T DO THAT DAY...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME.
I KNOW.
YEAH.

I'LL CARRY IT ALL ON MY BACK...!!

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ、コイ、ウラミコイ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...?
WHAT IS SHE REACTING TO...?

THAT SNOOZING IDIOT IS FINALLY HERE.

I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN HOLDING BACK UNTIL NOW TO NOT KILL AYAKA, BUT WHEN THE TIME COMES, USE ALL YOUR STRENGTH.

...!

ONCE I'VE PULLED THE OGRE OUT OF HER, IT'S YOUR TURN.

MASAKA!

I'M COUNTING ON YOU!

HEY, HAVE YOU EVER STOPPED AND WONDERED IF MAYBE SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH YOU?

LEAVE IT TO ME! I LOVE BEING RELIED ON!

CHAPTER 35: THE MOUNTAINS HAVE BROUGHT FORTH EIGHTY-FOUR THOUSAND RATS

ALL THAT'S LEFT/ TO DO-

IS TRUST OURSELVES!

BUT WE WON'T KNOW IF IT'S ENOUGH TO DEVOUR THE OGRE UNTIL WE GIVE IT A TRY.

HIS YOKAI POWER IS STRONGER THAN I EVER IMAGINED...!

HAHAH!

YOU BETTER BE READY!!

YEAH!

NOW THE REAL OGRE EXTERMINATION BEGINS!

THEY COMMUNICATE WITH NATURE THROUGH DIVINE ENERGY THAT SURROUNDS THEM.

PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THAT, THEIR BODIES HAVE A SPIRITUAL COMPOSITION THAT CLOSELY RESEMBLES THAT OF YOKAI, AND THEY DO NOT MATURE PAST THEIR TEENS.

THE DRAGON CLAN HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH TAKING CARE OF NATURE FOR GENERATIONS.

THE DRAGON CLAN IS ENDOWED WITH AN ABILITY TO MANIPULATE SPIRITUAL ENERGY.

THEY CAN DISPEL THE SPIRITUAL ENERGY OF A TARGET AND DISSIPATE IT.

AND OF COURSE, THE OPPOSITE IS ALSO POSSIBLE.

THEY CAN GATHER THE DIVINE ENERGY THAT SURROUNDS THEM AND HARNESS IT FOR THEIR STRENGTH.

STEP BACK A BIT, KYOICHI.

I LURED HER IN LIKE YOU ASKED ME TO, TATSUGA-SAN!

I COULD EASILY WIPE OUT A YOKAI LIKE YOU WITHOUT A TRACE.

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT, BUT...!!

EVEN IF A GAMBLE IMPROVED TO 'ONE-IN-A-HUNDRED ODDS FROM ONE-IN-A-MILLION, I SHOULD STILL STOP THEM.

I SHOULD BE RESTRAINING THE HOT-BLOODED YOUNGSTERS FROM DOING ANYTHING RECKLESS.

...PERHAPS I'VE BECOME A COWARDLY OLD MAN...

I LET MYSELF BECOME INFLUENCED BY THE YOUNGSTERS' GUTSINESS.

RIGHT, GOICCHAN!?

I SHOULD BE LEADING BY EXAMPLE AND NOT SITTING BACK COWERING IN FEAR WHILE THE YOUNGSTERS ARE GIVING IT ALL THEY'VE GOT, RIGHT!?

FU...

FJFUH.

HOW PATHETIC.

WHO WILL DEVOUR WHOM? THE RAGTAG GANG OF THE TWELVE CLANS, OR THE OGRE?

OUR ENEMY IS THE GREAT YOKAI!

IT'S GUT CHECK TIME!!

HERE WE COME!!

THIS ABSURD, IMPOSSIBLE PLAN!

ULTIMATE TECHNIQUE

TATSUGA CLAN

DRAGON RING TWIN FIST STRIKE

HUGE!!

SO

DO IT NOW!! MASAKA!

UNLEASH ALL THE POWER OF THE YEARLY BLESSED CLAN!!!

ドオ

DIVINE TECHNIQUE

DIVINE LIGHT BARRAGE KICK

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME!!!

IT'S WEAKENED! NOW...

HOLY... WHAT IS THAT?

GO, KYOICHI!!!

HOLD ON, AYAKA!!

THE ENTIRE SCHOOL TURNED BLACK...!?

BUT I DIDN'T THINK WE'D ACTUALLY HAVE A BETTER CHANCE...!

I CALLED IT AN IMPOSSIBLE PLAN BECAUSE I WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT OUR CHANCES.

LONG AGO, THERE WAS A SIMILAR YOKAI WHO CONTROLLED RATS.

THE TEETH OF THOSE RATS COULD BITE THROUGH METAL, AND THEY SWARMED LIKE A SEA OF DARKNESS.

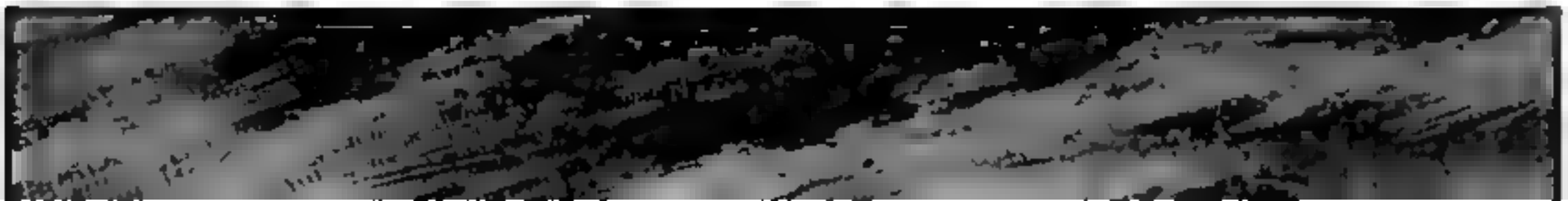
THE LEGENDS SAY THE RATS NUMBERED...

EIGHTY-FOUR THOUSAND.

...BAH...

INSANE.
THIS IS...

IS THAT THE NEKUNI CLAN'S...?



AYAKA...!

...AGH...

...

WE SOMEHOW PULLED THROUGH...

HA HA HA...

MASAKA LOOKS LIKE SHE'S OUT OF ENERGY, TOO.

I CAN BARELY MOVE.

I'VE NEVER HAD TO RIP OUT SOMETHING LIKE AN OGRE BEFORE, I'M DONE...

HAHA...

I MIGHT JUST COME BY THE NEKUNI MAIN HOUSE AND BORROW YOUR BIG BATH.

KYOICHI! I DON'T THINK I CAN EVEN MAKE IT BACK HOME NOW.

THE OGRE'S HORNS ARE STILL—

...!!

IT'S NOT OVER, KYOICHI!!

...!!?

IT LOOKED LIKE THE RATS DEVOURED THE OGRE, BUT THEY COULDN'T GET TO THE CORE!

IT'S REGENERATING ITSELF BY DEVOURING KYOICHI'S RATS.

IMPOSSIBLE...!

I SEE... THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY SPEAK OF IT AS A MAN-EATING OGRE.

...!

PULL THEM IN! HURRY!

ドクン

A RACE TO DEVOUR EACH OTHER IS PLAYING INTO ITS STRENGTHS INSTEAD...!

ドクン

WE DID WEAKEN IT TO THE POINT WHERE IT'S A SHELL OF ITS FORMER PHYSICAL FORM..

BUT WE'RE SPENT...

DID WE... FAIL...?

NO!

IT WANTS TO GO BACK INSIDE USHIGURA'S BODY!

...AGH...

USHI-GURA...

ZEN-SAN....

I CAN'T MOVE...

WE SEVERELY WEAKENED THE OGRE...

BUT KYOICHI'S POWERS WILL NOW WORK AGAINST US, AND MASAKA AND I ARE BOTH USELESS...

WE'RE BACK WHERE WE STARTED...!

IF IT GOES BACK INSIDE USHIGURA'S BODY,

WHA!?

AYAKA!

WH-

WH-

WH-

YEAH.

TH-THEN ARE YOU TELLING ME TO JUST SIT BACK AND WATCH?

YOU'RE SO EXHAJSTED THAT YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOOD FOR A MEAT SHIELD.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? NOW OF ALL TIMES-

YOU'LL JUST GET IN HIS WAY.

410

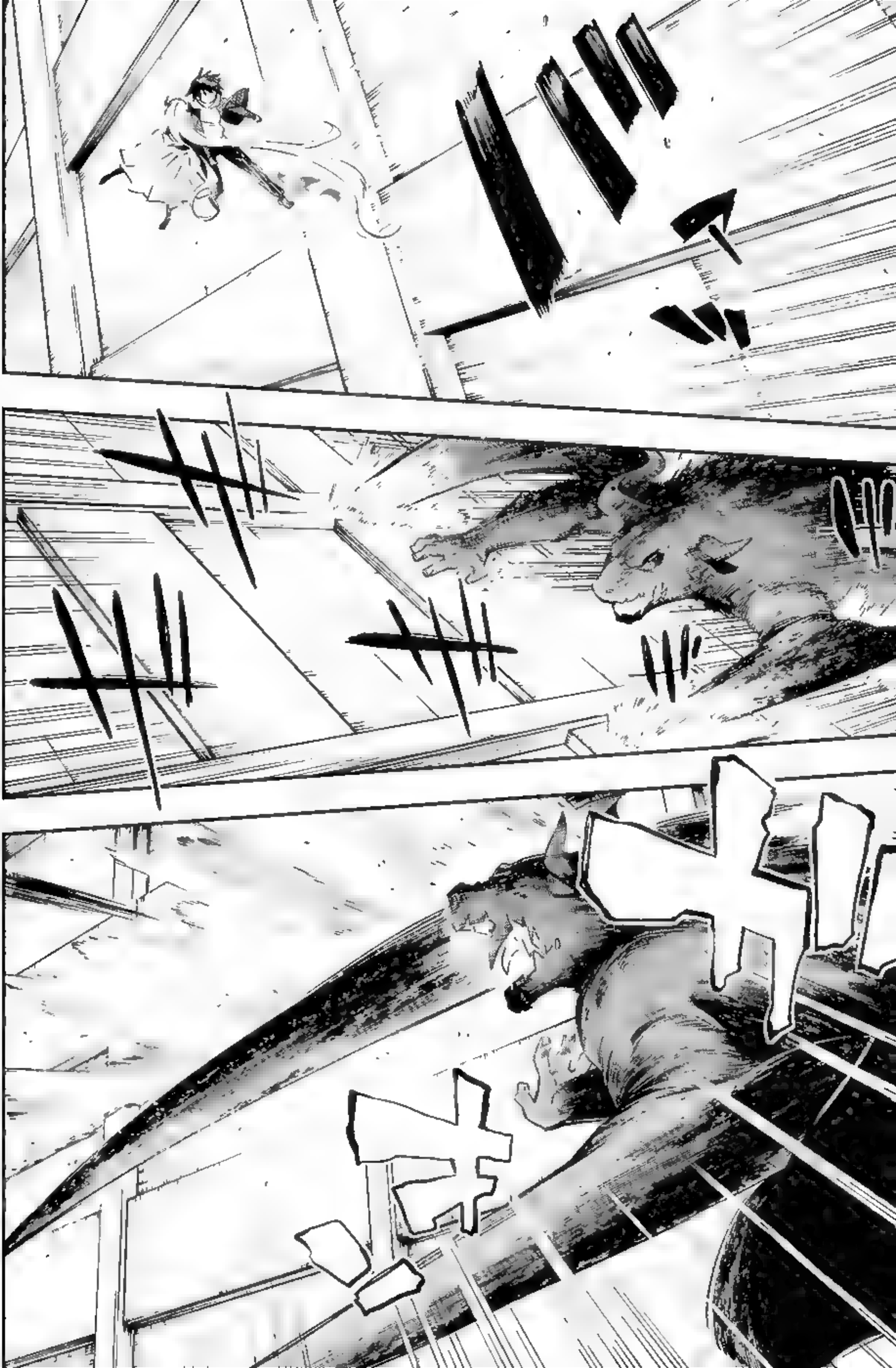
WITH JUST ONE LEAP...!

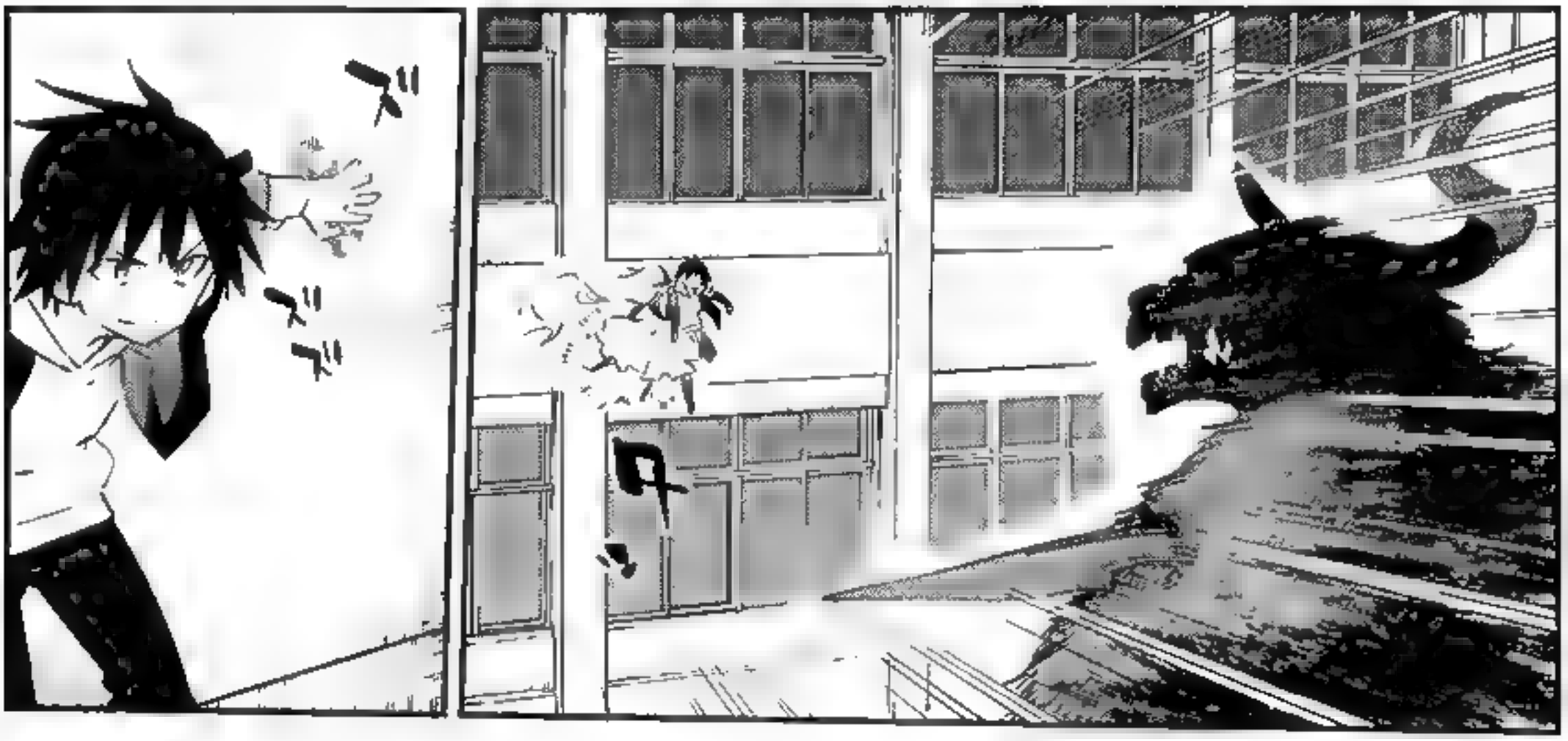
WHAT...

HEY, OGRE.

I'M CARRYING HER ON MY BACK.

I'M NOT HANDING HER OVER, EVEN IF I DIE!!





HIS PHYSICAL ABILITIES FAR SURPASS THAT OF AN ORDINARY YOKAI...

COULD HE...!?

REINFORCE A PART OF MY BODY

AND INCREASE MY PHYSICAL ABILITY BEYOND MY ORDINARY LIMIT...!

THE SECOND ABILITY THAT HE TAUGHT ME...

BUT THE REST OF HIS BODY IS STILL UNENHANCED!

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HIS ENTIRE BODY SHOULD BE SCREAMING IN PAIN.

ﾆﾔﾆﾔ

THE REJECTION FROM HIS BODY AND THE TREMENDOUS STRESS ON THE OTHER PARTS OF HIS BODY...

THAT GRANDSON THAT YOU NEVER ACCEPTED,

ARE YOU WATCHING FROM THE RIVER OF HADES, GOICCHAN?

BECAUSE HE WANTED NOTHING TO DO WITH THE NEKUNI, WHO YOU SAW AS NOTHING BUT A FAILURE...

THAT GRANDSON THAT YOU PUSHED AWAY,

HAS BECOME SOMEONE YOU CAN BE PROUD OF.

GA GA AAH!!

NO.

DO I USE THE BUILDINGS TO MY ADVANTAGE AND STOP ITS MOVEMENT?

EVEN IF I SUMMON RATS TO ATTACK IT, THEY'LL ONLY GET DEVOURED IN RETURN.

THAT'LL ONLY STOP IT FOR A MOMENT, BUT IT'S STILL SOMETHING.

JUST STOPPING IT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH IF I CAN'T DEVOUR IT ALL THE WAY DOWN TO ITS CORE!
EVEN IF I SEAL ITS MOVEMENT, I'M STILL STUCK WITH THE ORIGINAL PROBLEM.

WHAT, DID YOU GET LOST AGAIN?

IF WE CAN SOMEHOW DISINTEGRATE THE OGRE QUICKLY AND GET TO ITS CORE...!

IT'S THREATENING AYAKA-CHAN, RIGHT?

YEAH.

I DON'T REALLY GET WHAT'S GOING ON, AND MY HEAD'S HAZY,

BUT THAT'S AN ENEMY, RIGHT?

YEAH!!

THEN I'LL BARE MY CLAWS.

YOU ATTACKED MY FRIEND.

YOU RUINED THE DAY THAT MY FRIEND WORKED SO HARD ON!

I WON'T FORGIVE YOU!

HIII

I HATE YOU!!!

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ、ウラミコイ

CHAPTER 36:
AFTER THE
OGRE IS
EXTERMINATED,
RESPITE
ARRIVES

IS THIS HELL?

DID I DIE?

IT'S DARK, AND THERE'S NOTHIN' HERE.

WHAT HAPPENED TO TORAKO?

DID SHE DIE WITH ME BACK THERE...?

OR WAS IT JUST ME...?

...

BUT I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK OF...

ALL THE THINGS I WANTED TO DO BUT COULDN'T...

I NEVER WAS MUCH OF A CRIER...

I'M SUCH A NUMBSKULL.

...BUT MAYBE IT WAS BECAUSE...

IF SOMEONE YOU LOOK AT LIKE A SISTER ASKS YOU ON A DATE, THEN OF COURSE...

...YEAH.

I ACTED LIKE A SISTER TO HIM FOR TOO LONG.

IN MIDDLE SCHOOL... I THINK?

WHEN DID IT START?

IT WASN'T LIKE I LIKED HIM RIGHT FROM WHEN I MET HIM.

WHEN I RAN AWAY FROM HOME?

WHEN KYOICHI-SAN GOT A LETTER FROM A GIRL...?

WHEN HE WAS KIDNAP-PED?

WHEN HE BECAME TALLER THAN ME?

I DON'T KNOW.

...

ALL I KNOW IS THAT I LOVE HIM.

I WANTED TO TELL HIM HOW I FELT.

I WANTED HIM TO KNOW.

IF I GET ANOTHER CHANCE,

IF I COULD SEE HIS FACE AGAIN...

THAT BEIN' WITH HIM MADE ME HAPPY.

THAT THERE WERE DAYS WHEN I ONLY THOUGHT OF HIM.

I'D DEFINITELY...

I CAN DEAL WITH THIS SIZE...!!

NATSUHO! CUT HIM DOWN AS SMALL AS YOU CAN!

GOT IT!

ONCE YOU DO THAT, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE REST!

KYOICHI, NEKOGAZAKI...!!

GOOD LUCK!

ALL WE CAN DO IS LEAVE THE REST TO YOU.

WE TOOK DOWN HIS LEFT CLAW, SO THIS SIDE OF HIM IS WIDE OPEN.

I'LL TURN HIM INTO MINCEMEAT!

AUGH!

THE WALL!

NATSUHO!

I'M JUST AN OUTSIDER.

THEY WERE THE ONES WHO WERE ORIGINALLY CLOSE TO EACH OTHER.

JNGH.. AH..

...!

ｶﾞﾊﾞ

ｶﾞﾊﾞ

BECAUSE THEY'RE SO KIND TO ME.

BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS CHEERING THEM ON.

ズ!!

ズ!!

DO YOUR BEST...!

I FELT LIKE I DIDN'T BELONG, AND LET AYAKA-CHAN HAVE HIM.

ズ!!

PLEASE GO ON A DATE WITH ME...!

YEAH, YEAH!

? IF YOU SAY SO...

I-I'M SURE.

I-I'D FEEL BETTER...

IF YOU WENT...

A-ARE YOU SURE?

THEN I'M GONNA DO MY BEST!!

AND THE DAY THAT MY FRIEND WORKED SO HARD FOR...!

ALRIGHT!

HOW DARE YOU

RUIN EVERY-THING!!

UWAA-AAAA-AAAH!
INDIVIDUALLY, TOO!
SHE'S CONTROLLING MULTIPLE CLAWS...!!

NICE, NATSUHO!

HUH? A CORE?

DO YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE A CORE!?

...! EVEN IF YOU BEAT IT, IT'LL JUST REGENERATE!

JUST LEAVE THE REST TO M—

KYOICHI! IS THAT IT? WE HAVE TO BEAT THAT THING!?

!?

WHAT?

NATSUHO!

IT CAN FIGHT BACK EVEN IN THAT STATE!?

KYOICHI!!

DAMN IT!

YOU CAN SEE IT NOW, CAN'T YOU!?

NGH... I WON'T GET THERE IN...

USE IT!

I APPRECIATE THAT, BUT WHY DID YOU DO THAT?

THE NEKUNI ARE YOUR SWORN ENEMIES...

HE RAN ON A GIGANTIC SCYTHE AND CAUGHT UP!!

WHAT IS THAT...!?

I HAVE A PERSONAL DEBT WITH HIM.

AND AN ITACHIZUKA ALWAYS REPAYS HIS DEBTS.

I OWE YOU ONE, TOYA.

I SAID, I'M NOT HANDING HER OVER TO YOU,

OGRE!!

YOU BA...

ARRA TA DA D...

AA SS TS

AAAA

...

...KA

AYAKA...

...KA.

...IS IT... HEAVEN...?

AYAKA...

HUH...? WHY IS THERE A LIGHT IN HELL...?

_HUH?

IT'S KYOICHI...

SAN...

ゴー
ゴー…

OH? YOU'RE UP!

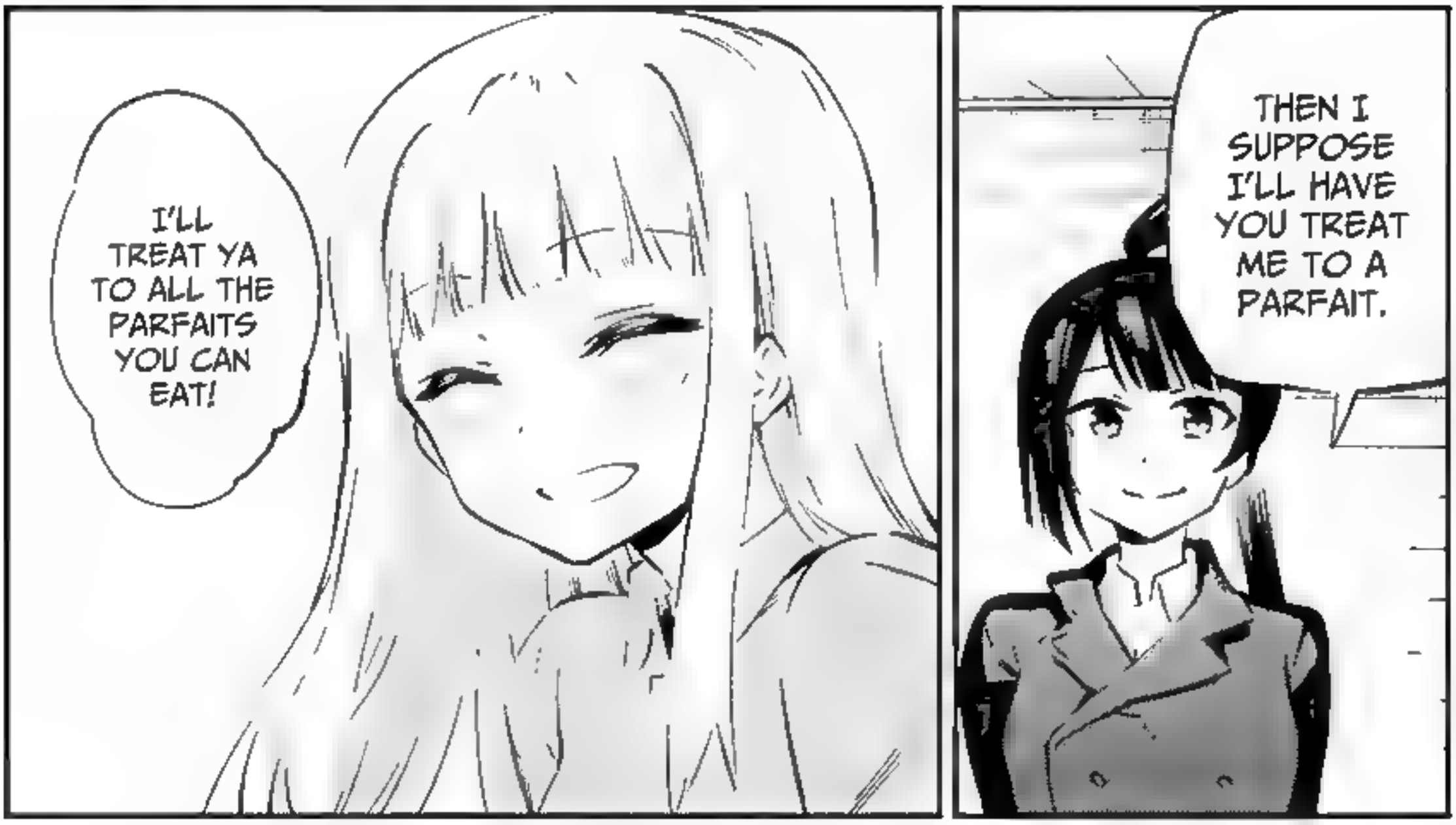
HARU-CHAN!

I GOTTA THANK EVERYONE!

IT WAS A HUGE RESCUE PLAN ORCHESTRATED BY EVERYONE WHO RUSHED TO THE SCENE.

I DID WHAT ANYONE WOULD FOR THEIR BEST FRIEND.

THANKS SO MUCH! I HEARD THAT YOU ALL SAVED ME.


I'LL TREAT YA TO ALL THE PARFAITS YOU CAN EAT!
THEN I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE YOU TREAT ME TO A PARFAIT.

I KNOW WHO SHE IS, WE MET YESTERDAY.
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. LET ME INTRODUCE HER TO YA...

HUH? WHAT'S WRONG, SANA-CHAN?
?
RIGHT?
SHE'S THE HORSE PERSON...

PLEASE, I DON'T WANT YER MONEY!!

IF ANYTHING, I'M THE ONE WHO OWES YOU... PLEASE TAKE ALL MY MONEY...

WE WERE HEADED IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION TO INVESTIGATE AND WHEN WE REALIZED WHAT WAS GOING ON IT WAS ALREADY ALL OVER...

I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING THIS TIME.

IT LOOKS LIKE MY BODY IS STILL A YOKAI BODY.

I

I'M NOT SAD ANYMORE.

PLEASE DON'T MAKE THAT FACE.

EVEN THOUGH WE GOT THE BAD PARTS OUT, I CAN'T GO BACK TO THE WAY I WAS...

I'M THE WORST...

MY... MY BODY'S LIKE THIS... I CAN'T BE THE HEAD ANYMORE...

BESIDES...

WE'LL JUST APPOINT SOMEONE ELSE AS HEAD. IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL.

DON'T BE SILLY.

POPS...

I TOLD YOU, CALL ME DADDY.

DO YOU THINK I'D DOTE ANY LESS ON YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU WERE TURNED INTO A YOKAI?

A-A-A-AYAKA-CHAN!

I HAVE SUCH A CUTE YOKAI SENPAI!

BESIDES!

STILL DOWN

BUT I'M SURE I'LL BE FINE.

...I CAN'T SAY THAT I'M NOT WORRIED,

?

AHA HAH!

YOU'RE TICKLIN ME...

WHA—

NACCHAN! STOP!

HUH? UH, NO, IT'S NOT ALL THAT DIFFERENT FROM A HUMAN'S...

WHA- YA MEAN, DOES IT SMELL LIKE A PERFUME!?

IT'S WEIRD.

IF I SMELL YOU UP CLOSE, YOU HAVE A YOKAI'S SMELL.

I'M JUST HAPPY

THAT I CAN TALK TO MY FRIEND AGAIN.

I FEEL LIKE SOMETHING IMPORTANT HAPPENED AFTER I LEFT THE NEKUNI HOUSE...

I ACTUALLY DON'T REMEMBER A LOT...

AHAHA, WELL... UM...

I HEARD THAT YA DID GREAT, NACCHAN!

BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE.

I'M GLAD YOU SEEM TO BE WELL.

I LOVE YOU,

AYAKA.

TORAKO...?

...TORAKO, RIGHT?

...IT'LL TAKE A LONG TIME TO EXPLAIN, BUT THERE ARE A COUPLE OF THINGS.

IT'S NOT TORAKO'S FAULT.

YES. I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT TORAKO WAS BEHIND THE SLASHING INCIDENTS TOGETHER WITH THE RABBIT CLAN.

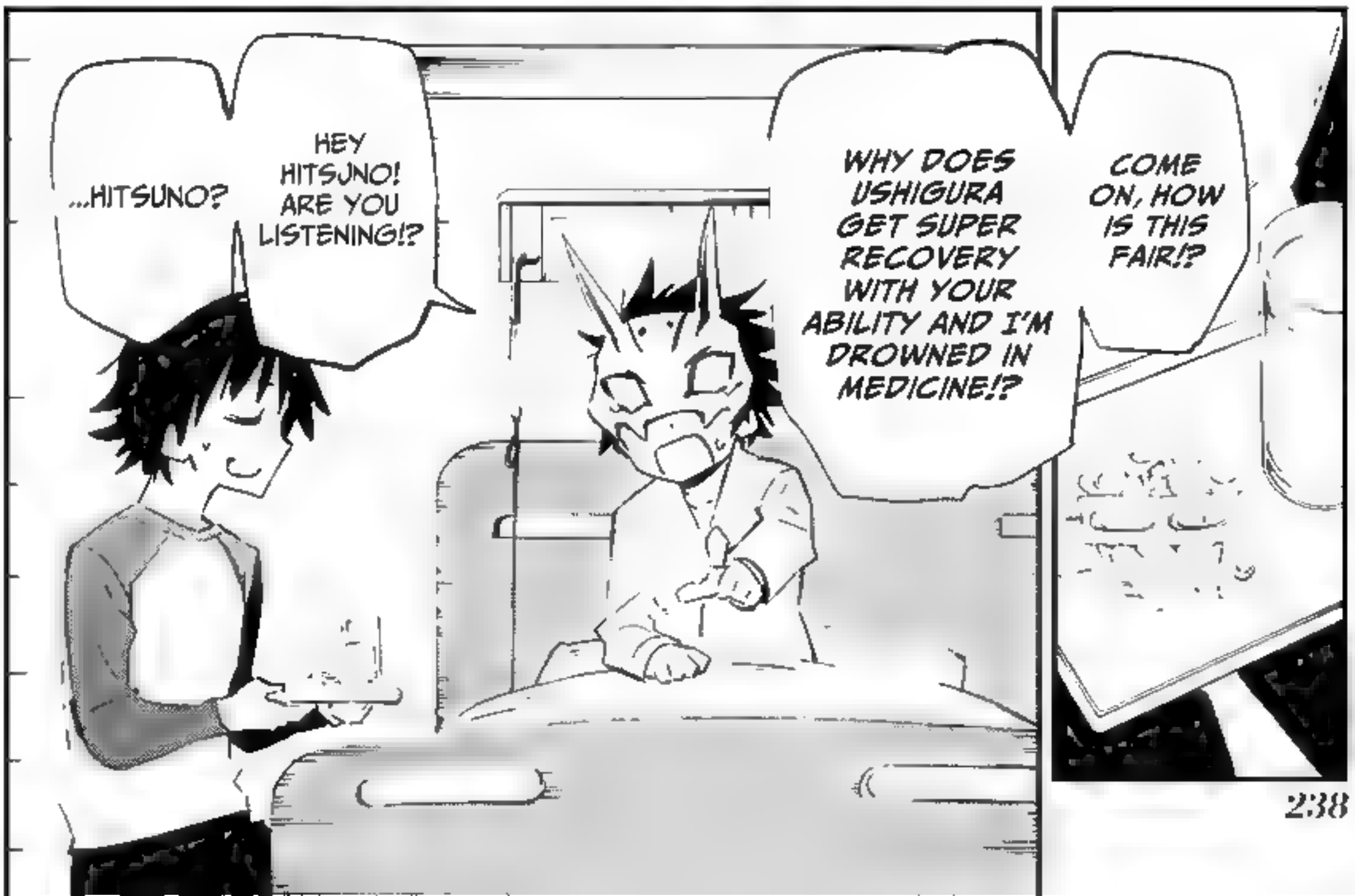
...WHAT HAPPENED?

TORAIWA GROUP

NEED TO GO TO THE TORAIWA CLAN'S BASEMENT.

AND WE...

I TOLD YOU, I'M NOT DRINKING ANY MEDICINE!!
BASEMENT? WHAT'S...


...HITSUNO?
HEY HITSUNO! ARE YOU LISTENING!?
WHY DOES USHIGURA GET SUPER RECOVERY WITH YOUR ABILITY AND I'M DROWNED IN MEDICINE!?
COME ON, HOW IS THIS FAIR!?

STAY AWAKE WHEN SOMEONE'S TALKING TO YOU!!

...HM?

OH, I FELL ASLEEP

HEAD OF THE HITSUNO CLAN

MIKO HITSUNO

HP

I'm not the one prescr b ng the med cine to you to begin with

THE HITSUNOS' ABILITY IS TO MAKE OTHER PEOPLE RECOVER BY SLEEPING WITH THEM.

WELL, BUT I CAN ONLY SLEEP WITH ONE PERSON A NIGHT.

RIGHT?

HUH?

AND... AYAKA-CHAN'S SOFT...

AND SMELLS GOOD...

KYOICHI! TELL HER TO STOP TREATING ME LIKE AN OLD MAN...

MY BODY IS STILL IN ITS TEENS!

I BET YOU SMELL LIKE AN OLD MAN...

U?

AAAAH! YOU TRAITOR!

ZEN-SAN! YOUR LEG AND BACK ARE WEAK, RIGHT? LET'S TAKE IT EASY.

HEY!! STOP EGGING HIM ON!

HUH?

Doesn't even realize she's egging him on

I'll tell the nurses that he doesn't need medicine anymore

AT THIS RATE, HE'LL LIVE ANOTHER HUNDRED YEARS.

I HATE YOU, KYOICH.!

I'M GOING TO SLEEP! I HAVE NO FRENDS!

He's sulking..

UM... WHAT DOES SHE MEAN "SLEEP WITH?"

ALREADY EXPERIENCED IT FIRSTHAND

CAN'T SAY

I'M GONNA GO CHECK ON THE OTHERS NEXT DOOR, SO DON'T DO ANYTHING WEIRD.

DON'T WORRY, I'LL ONLY DO WEIRD THINGS TO GIRLS.

HEY.

OH, MASAKA-SENPAI? YOU'RE HERE ALREADY?

DOH-WAA-APH!!

KYOICHI-SAAAA-ANN!!

HEY, COME ON...

WAIT...!

THIS IS FOR THE AFTER-NOON!

She's even better than I thought

HEY! AYAKA! YOU... ALREADY DID THIS TO ME THIS... MORNING! THIS MORNING!

?

UH...

AYAKA...

DO YOU...

HOW CAN YOU DO THIS...

AFTER... WHAT YOU SAID YESTERDAY ..

HUH?

NOT...

REMEMBER..?

...?

DID I SAY SOME-THING...?

A... ANYWAY! GET OFF OF ME.

GO BACK TO BED.

GET SOME REST.

SEE YA.

WAAAH! WHAT DID I DO!? WAAAAAH!

WH-WH-WH-WH-WHAT'S WRONG WITH KYOICHI-SAN? IS HE T-T-TIRED!?

十一

AYAKA...

KA...?

GREAT...!

YOU'RE BACK.

AYA...

IT'S

KYOICHI-SAN

I
LOVE
YOU.

URAMIKOI, KOI, URAMIKOI 7 END

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ、コイ、ウラミコイ。

OMAKE: QUICK HORSE

THEN I'M SORRY, BUT IT'D BE BETTER IF YOU TRANSFORM SO I CAN RUN EASIER!

W-WELL, I GUESS I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE...

...

HEY...

WE CAN'T JUST SIT HERE! WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!

TOYA-KUN, ARE YOU GONNA STAY HERE?

NO, I OWE YOU, SO I'LL COME, TOO.

AYAKA BECAME A YOKAI!?

RIGHT AFTER AYAKA BECAME A YOKAI

BLAH BLAH EXPOSITION

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? FOCUS ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW!

YOU'RE A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL! ARE YOU REALLY GONNA GO OUT WEARING THAT!?

WH-WHAT? I'M THE ONE BEING YELLED AT!?

AFTERWORD

THE OGRE ARC IS FINALLY OVER. THE IDEA OF THE RAT RETURNING THE FAVOR TO THE OX FOR BEING CARRIED ON ITS BACK ALL THIS TIME WAS SOMETHING I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT DOING EVEN BEFORE THE SERIALIZATION BEGAN, SO I'M HAPPY TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DRAW THIS STORY OUT. AND THE GOAT IS FINALLY FORMALLY INTRODUCED, SO THERE'S ONLY ONE MORE REVEAL LEFT OF THE TWELVE CLANS. PLEASE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT VOLUME.

スペシャルサンクス

武田ルイ様　　担当Y本様
田部井悠記様
三崎祐輝様　　&読者の皆様方

あいつだけは、
どぶネズミ家の
あのジジイだけは
絶ツ対ニ許サねえ…！

…かーちゃん

あちきは最後の最後で
びびっちまったんだ
ほんとうの馬鹿に
なれなかったんだ

いってくるよ

温…泉…？

あの日、
鬼を退治した時間
町の中心で何が…

かぁぁぁぁ

あ～
赤くなって…

予告

あれ…？
こんな恭一さん
見たこと
ねぇんですけど…？
んん？？

「恨み来、恋、恨み恋。」Uramikoi, Koi, Uramikoi. 8
今冬発売予定

※単行本発売時のまま収録しています。